Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.

BACK TO GODHEAD

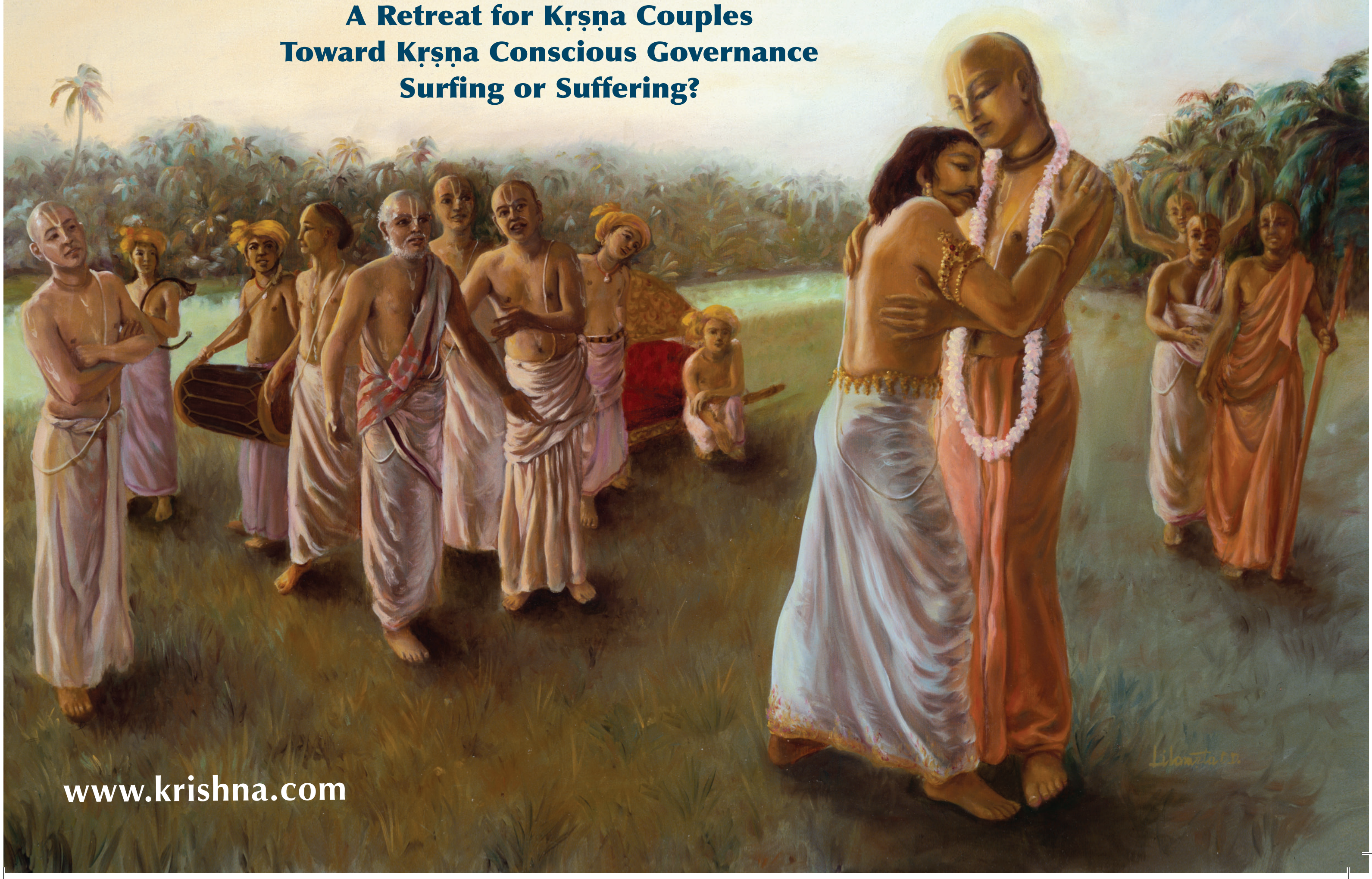
The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement • Mar/Apr 2014 • $4.50

The Perfect Conversation

In a classic reversal of roles, the Lord and His devotee discuss the highest spiritual truths.

ALSO:

Why Is the Bhagavad-gītā So Pessimistic?
Abhay Charan: A Special Gift
A Retreat for Kṛṣṇa Couples
Toward Kṛṣṇa Conscious Governance
Surfing or Suffering?



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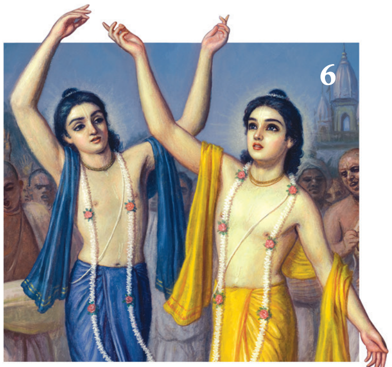
BACK to GODH

Founded 1944 • Vol. 48, No. 2 • March / April 2014

20


6

25

45

50

34

28

FEATURES

Founder's Lecture

6 Rescuing Suffering Humanity
Śrīla Prabhupāda explains the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Lord Kṛṣṇa delivering special mercy for the people of this age.

12 Abhay Charan: A Special Gift
A doctor's recommendation forces a young devotee couple to consider the unthinkable.

How I Came to Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

17 They Won, I Lost
His mother's desire that he live a spiritual life, shared later by his wife, seemed like it might never be fulfilled.

20 Why Is the Bhagavad-gītā So Pessimistic?
Even if we find Lord Kṛṣṇa's view to be realistic, we still have ample reason for optimism.

25 Toward Kṛṣṇa Conscious Governance
Do devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa have any responsibility in the face of the present calamities created by bad leadership all over the world?

28 A Retreat for Kṛṣṇa Couples
The first retreat for married couples organized by ISKCON's Grihastha Vision Team inspires requests for more.

34 Rāmānanda Saṁvāda: The Perfect Conversation
Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and one of His most intimate devotees discuss the most confidential spiritual truths.

45 Surfing or Suffering?
The apparent pleasure of surfing provides a fitting illustration of a universal principle of material existence.

52 Playing with Kṛṣṇa
How a preschool in Australia connects children with Kṛṣṇa.

EAD

DEPARTMENTS

Letters 4

Glossary 11

e-Krishna 19

Calendar 33

Book Section: Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 39
King Aṅga's Need for a Son

Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out 43
"Overpowered by Insanity"

Hare Kṛṣṇa Mahā-Mantra 50

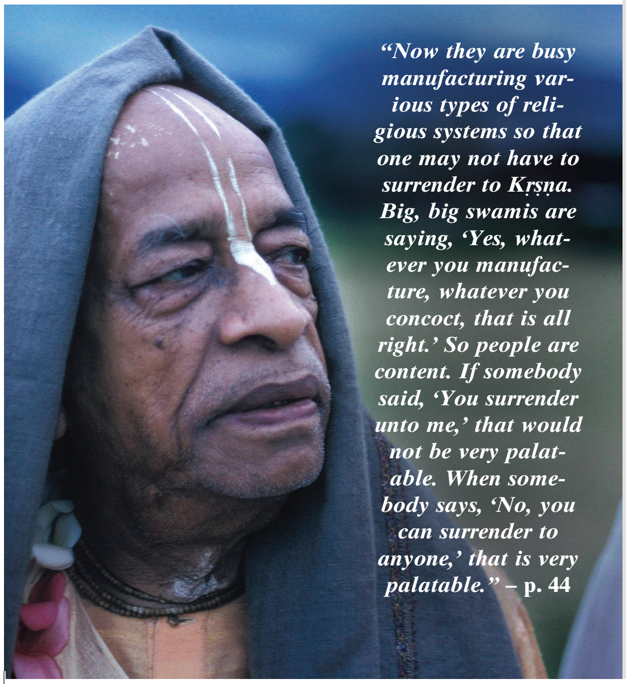
Centers Around the World 57

From the Editor 62
"Kṛṣṇa Is Coming!"

Krishna.com Store 63

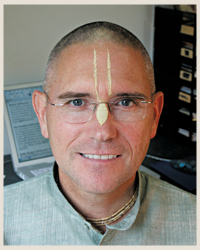
Vedic Thoughts 67

COVER Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Rāmānanda Rāya, a district governor, meet on the bank of the Godavari River, where they will discuss deep spiritual topics. Please see the article beginning on page 34. (Painting by Līlāmṛta Devī Dāsī)



> *"Now they are busy manufacturing various types of religious systems so that one may not have to surrender to Kṛṣṇa. Big, big swamis are saying, 'Yes, whatever you manufacture, whatever you concoct, that is all right.' So people are content. If somebody said, 'You surrender unto me,' that would not be very palatable. When somebody says, 'No, you can surrender to anyone,' that is very palatable."* – p. 44

WELCOME



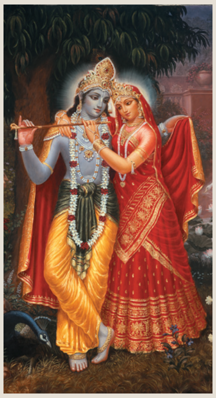
This issue's nine feature articles cover a wide range of subjects. Our cover story, Satyarāja Dāsa's "Rāmānanda Saṁvāda: The Perfect Conversation," tells of a five-hundred-year-old dialogue on Kṛṣṇa consciousness that was also wide ranging, covering philosophical topics from the most basic to the most elevated. To establish the basic points, Rāmānanda Rāya mainly quoted the *Bhagavad-gītā.* In "Why Is the Bhagavad-gītā So Pessimistic?" Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa replies to a common question about that time-honored book of wisdom.

Several articles concern real-life application of the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In "Abhay Charan: A Special Gift," a husband and wife face a medical decision related to their unborn child. "Playing with Kṛṣṇa" discusses ways preschool children can have fun while learning about Kṛṣṇa. "A Retreat for Kṛṣṇa Couples" reports on a seminar designed to help couples progress harmoniously in their spiritual lives.

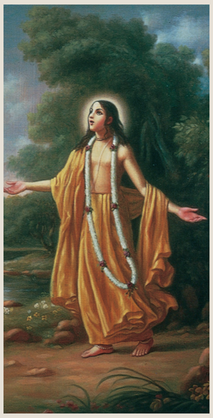
Deviating from these family-oriented themes, Indra Kṛṣṇa Dāsa's "Toward Kṛṣṇa Conscious Governance" addresses a higher-level issue: the dangerous character and policies of today's political leaders. The author calls for Lord Kṛṣṇa's devotees to seek government positions, where the wisdom of Kṛṣṇa's teachings can truly guide humanity. Hare Kṛṣṇa.—*Nāgarāja Dāsa, Editor*

OUR PURPOSES

- To help all people discern reality from illusion, spirit from matter, the eternal from the temporary.
- To expose the faults of materialism.
- To offer guidance in the Vedic techniques of spiritual life.
- To preserve and spread the Vedic culture.
- To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God as taught by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.



Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are together the one Supreme Absolute Truth.



Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the combined incarnation of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, inaugurated the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa five hundred years ago.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

BACK TO
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*The Magazine of the
Hare Krishna Movement*

FOUNDER (under the direction of His Divine Grace Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda) **His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda** (1896–1977)

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Letters

Search for the Self

I am a man on the path looking for my spiritual self. I've been reading a lot about spirituality and metaphysics (the sciences of the spirit), and many of your teachings and writings match up with my instincts, which come from the scientific mind and the spiritual heart. But I still feel lost as to where to begin my journey, as I am still young. Can you offer any guidance to someone willing to open their mind and heart to finding themselves and the absolute?

Salem Shand
Via the Internet

Our reply: We are happy to hear that you are looking for your spiritual self. We suggest you read *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is,* by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. The information in that book is life changing.

You are correct in your understanding that the process of devotional service and self-realization is a scientific and spiritual quest. We are all spiritual beings in a temporary material situation. With proper direction and following various practices – especially chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare and reading *Bhagavad-gītā* – you will find that your path becomes much clearer and your realization of your spiritual nature more focused.

If you have any specific questions, we will be happy to answer.

Encouraging Words

Hi. I just need to hear some words of motivation.

Dave
Via the Internet

Our reply: Close your eyes and do a meditation: Think how many things in this world will make you permanently happy and cost nothing. Now open your eyes and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. The Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra can open the door to eternal, spiritual happiness, which is not available anywhere else, never needs an upgrade, and is always available just by opening your mouth.

To keep this thought fresh, however, you need to associate with Kṛṣṇa's devotees. Reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and associating with persons aware of this wonderful treasure keeps us fresh and enlivened. Going to websites like ISKCONdesiretree.com and Krishna.com can help, and going to a temple is even better. But chanting and reading on your own are also a good use of your time.

Try to keep your mind and senses free from clutter. Don't fill your mind and heart with silly desires. With the pervasiveness of advertising, it is easy to be bombarded with things to want, things that promise to give us pleasure. Just remember that there is only one thing that will give eternal pleasure and costs nothing: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

One-on-One Spiritual Master

I am a devotee starting off with ISKCON and would like to know from an experienced devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa how to obtain a special one-on-one Hare Kṛṣṇa master, since His Divine A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda has passed on.

Gurumataji
Via the Internet

Our reply: When beginning Kṛṣṇa consciousness within ISKCON, it is best to develop a relationship with Śrīla Prabhupāda. Although he is not physically present, he is available in his teachings, books, recorded classes, videos, etc. He is also present in his temples and through his devotees.

Try to get as much association as possible via websites such as Krishna.com and ISKCONdesiretree.com, as well as by going to a temple when possible. Ask questions and listen to classes and discussions. Begin to practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness according to Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions by chanting daily on beads, eating only food offered to Kṛṣṇa, and following the four regulations: no meat-eating, no illicit sexual connection, no gambling, and no intoxication. By reading, hearing, associating, and following his instructions, you will develop a relationship with Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Once that is clear and strong, then you can consider who you will have as a personal master. There are many qualified devotees who can assist in this way. You can begin by hearing their classes on ISKCONdesiretree.com and whenever possible meeting them in person. Eventually you will find someone whose words and example enliven you and strengthen you in your spiritual practices. It is best to be patient and take time to carefully search for this person.

Worried Victim

I am victim of domestic violence by my wife. She filed a false dowry allegation against my family. I am very tensed and worried about how I can win the court case. I am a devotee of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Nirmal
Via the Internet

Our reply: Being a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa means seeing everything that happens in life as His arrangement and His mercy for our purification. The Pāṇḍavas had to overcome many reverses, but they never lost faith in the Lord. If you can maintain your devotion and yet see Kṛṣṇa's hand in this difficult time, your strength in Kṛṣṇa's service will increase.

Life in the material world is always filled with problems, but rest assured that these problems are temporary and as they come they will also go. Whatever happens, try to see the lesson to be learned and remain peaceful and fixed in the understanding that whatever the Lord does is designed to bring us to Him on a deeper level.

Replies were written by Krishna.com Live Help volunteers. Please write to us at: BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, Florida 32616, USA. Email: editors@krishna.com.

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FOUNDER'S LECTURE

Vrindavan, India – April 20, 1975

RESCUING SUFFERING HUMANITY

Lord Kṛṣṇa descended in an especially merciful form in this age, when almost everyone suffers from degraded living in this and previous lives.

by His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society
For Krishna Consciousness

namo mahā-vadānyāya
kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te
kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-caitanya-
nāmne gaura-tviṣe namaḥ

"O most munificent incarnation! You are Kṛṣṇa Himself appearing as Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. You have assumed the golden color of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and You are widely distributing pure love of Kṛṣṇa. We offer our respectful obeisances unto You."

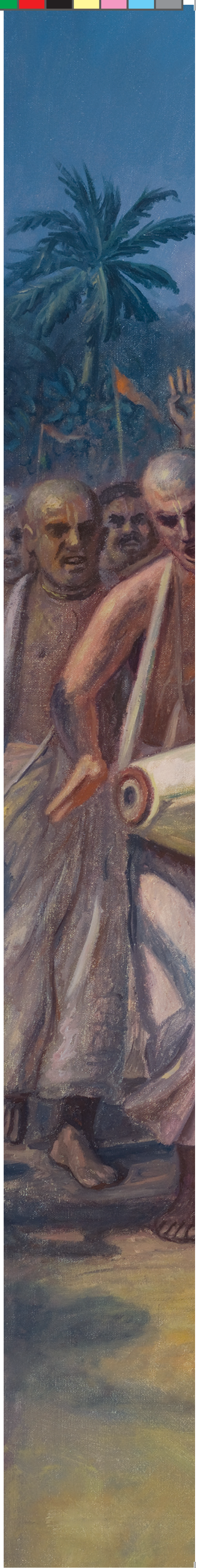
– *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta,*
Madhya-līlā 19.53

ŚRĪ CAITANYA Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa Himself. *Kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-caitanya-nāmne:* He has assumed the name Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. Actually He is Kṛṣṇa. That is confirmed in many literatures. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.5.32) it is said,

kṛṣṇa-varṇaṁ tviṣākṛṣṇaṁ
sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam
yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana prāyair
yajanti hi su-medhasaḥ

"In the age of Kali, intelligent persons perform congregational chanting to worship the incarnation of Godhead who constantly sings the names of Kṛṣṇa. Although His complexion is not blackish, He is Kṛṣṇa Himself. He is accompanied by His associates, servants, weapons, and confidential companions."

After accepting the *sannyāsa* order of life, Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was called Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. Rūpa Gosvāmī, who composed the verse we are speaking on today, is saying, "You are Kṛṣṇa, and You have now come as Kṛṣṇa Caitanya." Why? *Kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te:* "Just to distribute love of Kṛṣṇa."



About five hundred years ago in West Bengal, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (in yellow), Nityānanda Prabhu, and Their associates perform saṅkīrtana, *the congregational chanting of Kṛṣṇa's holy names.*

Painting by Saccidānanda Dāsa

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission was to teach that the goal of life is love of God: *premā pum-artho mahān.* Generally people associated with Vedic culture understand the goals of life to be *dharma, artha, kāma,* and *mokṣa:* religion, economic development, sense gratification, and liberation. But Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said that above *mokṣa,* above liberation, is love of God – *premā pum-artho mahān.* This is confirmed in the second verse of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* which rejects *dharma-artha-kāma-mokṣa* as *kaitava-dharma,* or in simple words "cheating religion." *Kaitava* means cheating or false. According to Vyāsadeva, the author of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, dharma-artha-kāma-mokṣa* is not the essential thing. The real thing is to advance in the science of loving God, Kṛṣṇa. Love for Kṛṣṇa is called *kṛṣṇa-prema.*

The *Bhāgavatam* (1.2.6) also says,

sa vai puṁsāṁ paro dharmo
yato bhaktir adhokṣaje
ahaituky apratihatā
yayātmā suprasīdati

"The supreme occupation [dharma] for all humanity is that by which men can attain to loving devotional service unto the transcendent Lord. Such devotional service must be unmotivated and uninterrupted to completely satisfy the self." If you really want peace, then you should stand on the platform of *para dharma,* the supreme occupation.

The word *para,* or supreme, is also applicable to the supreme controller, the Puruṣa, who is Kṛṣṇa, as described by Arjuna in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.12):

paraṁ brahma paraṁ dhāma
pavitraṁ paramaṁ bhavān
puruṣaṁ śāśvataṁ divyam
ādi-devam ajaṁ vibhum

"You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the ultimate abode, the purest, the Absolute Truth. You are the eternal, transcendental, original person, the unborn, the greatest."

And the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.1) states,

īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ
sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ
anādir ādir govindam
sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam

"Kṛṣṇa, who is known as Govinda, is the Supreme Godhead. He has an eternal blissful spiritual body. He is the origin of all. He has no other origin, and He is the prime cause of all causes."

Kṛṣṇa personally came to teach *kṛṣṇa-bhakti.* He came here to this district of Mathura. His birthplace is still here. Kṛṣṇa came five thousand years ago to teach the science of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti.* When speaking the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.8), He proposed *dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya sambhavāmi yuge yuge*: "I appear age after age to establish dharma." But at the end of the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.66) He says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja:* "Abandon all varieties of dharma and just surrender unto Me." And this is confirmed in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.1.2) – *dharma-projjhita kaitavo 'tra:* Except surrendering to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, anything going on in the name of dharma is not dharma. Therefore Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya:* "Give up all so-called dharma."

Kṛṣṇa did not come to establish the Hindu religion or the Christian religion or the Muslim religion. No. Religion is religion. Gold is gold. You cannot say "Hindu gold," "Muslim gold," "Christian gold." That is not possible. That way of looking at religion is called *kaitava-dharma,* cheating dharma. Gold is gold – pure gold.

Therefore the *Bhāgavatam* (6.3.19) says, *dharmaṁ tu sākṣād bhagavat-praṇītam:* "Dharma means the order or the law given by God." That is dharma. This is the simple explanation of dharma. Dharma means *dharmaṁ tu sākṣād bhagavat-praṇītam.* Take, for example, the state law. The law means that which is given or sanctioned by the governor. You cannot make your own law at home. You cannot say, "I don't care for the law given by the government or by the governor. I shall make my own law." That is not possible. That will never be accepted as law. Similarly, if you manufacture dharma without any reference to the authority, that is not dharma. That is cheating religion.

The Beginning Of Spiritual Education

Therefore, what the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, speaks is dharma. *Mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja:* "Surrender to Me alone." All other things are cheating. And when Kṛṣṇa says, *mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja,* He does not say it to any particular community or any country or any nation. He speaks to everyone.

sarva-yoniṣu kaunteya
mūrtayaḥ sambhavanti yāḥ
tāsāṁ brahma mahad yonir
ahaṁ bīja-pradaḥ pitā

"I am the seed-giving father of all forms of life." (*Gītā* 14.4) Kṛṣṇa does not say, "I am speaking to Indian or Hindus." No. Kṛṣṇa is speaking to everyone, to all His sons. It doesn't matter whether they are white or black or blue – it doesn't matter. To see in terms of the body is called "skin disease." Kṛṣṇa says that we must not take the body as the self. The body goes through a natural transformation from childhood to youth to old age, but the part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa is

Kṛṣṇa is speaking to everyone, to all His sons. It doesn't matter whether they are white or black or blue.

there within the body. You have to understand that. That is the beginning of the knowledge given in the *Bhagavad-gītā.* We have to understand that which is within the body. That is the beginning of spiritual education.

Unfortunately, the whole world is going on under the impression that "I am this body." They think, "I am Indian" or "I am European." That thinking is condemned in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.84.13): *yasyātma-buddhiḥ kuṇape tri-dhātuke . . . janeṣu abhijñeṣu sa eva go-kharaḥ. Go* means cow, and *kharaḥ* means ass. If one takes it that "I am this body," "I am Indian," "I am American," the *Bhāgavatam* says, "He is not even a human being." *Sa eva go-kharaḥ:* "He is a cow or an ass."

This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is very, very important because everyone is thinking he is the body. Nobody understands that he is within the body, just as I am within this dress but I am not this dress. This is the primary education of spiritual life. Unfortunately, it is very much lacking.

Now you can see practically that these European and American boys, although they are all young men, have forgotten the bodily relationship. In our institution, we have Africans, Canadians, Australians, Europeans, Indians, but they do not consider with reference to the bodily concept of life. They live as eternal servants of Kṛṣṇa. That is the instruction given by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. *Jīvera 'svarūpa' haya—kṛṣṇera 'nitya-dāsa':* "It is the living entity's constitutional position to be an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa." (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 20.108)

If we want to be happy, then we have to accept the principle of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.6), which states that the highest dharma is *bhakti,* or devotion, to Kṛṣṇa: *yato bhaktir adhokṣaje. Bhakti* comes out of love. You cannot force someone to love you. It comes automatically. That automatic love for Kṛṣṇa is there in everyone's heart. That is stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.107):

nitya-siddha kṛṣṇa-prema 'sādhya'
kabhu naya
śravaṇādi-śuddha-citte karaye udaya

"Pure love for Kṛṣṇa is eternally established in the hearts of the living entities. It is not something to be gained from another source. When the heart is purified by hearing and chanting [about Kṛṣṇa], this love naturally awakens." *Udaya* means "it is awakened." Everyone has love for Kṛṣṇa within the heart. That is natural. But that love is distributed in different ways, to family, community, nation, country. It has to be concentrated, converted to love of Kṛṣṇa. That is required. Then everything is perfect. That is Caitanya Mahāprabhu's teaching.

Rescuing Jagāis and Mādhāis

Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.3),

manuṣyāṇāṁ sahasreṣu
kaścid yatati siddhaye
yatatām api siddhānāṁ
kaścin māṁ vetti tattvataḥ

"Out of many thousands among men, one may endeavor for perfection, and of those who have achieved perfection, hardly one knows Me in truth." We cannot even understand what Kṛṣṇa is, what to speak of loving Him. That is a very difficult job. But Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu distributed love of Kṛṣṇa. Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, standing before you with Lord Nityānanda, delivered many, many sinful persons to the transcendental position of love of Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura has sung, *vrajendra-nandana yei, śacī-suta hoilo sei, balarāma hoilo nitāi:* Kṛṣṇa became Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and Balarāma became Nitāi, or Nityānanda. The same two brothers who came as Rāma-Lakṣmaṇa and Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma came again as Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda Prabhu. What was Their business? *Pāpī-tāpī jata chilo, hari-nāme uddhārilo:* They delivered all the sinful persons and those suffering from material anxieties by giving them the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. *Tāra sākṣī jagāi mādhāi:* "The evidence

What Is the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement?

Founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) carries on a great ancient tradition rooted in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* the teachings Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke five millennia ago. The *Gītā* and the other Vedic scriptures declare Kṛṣṇa to be the original person, God Himself, who appears periodically in this world to liberate all living beings.

Only five hundred years ago, Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach the most sublime and effective means of meditation for the present day: the chanting of the names of God, especially as found in the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

Today members of ISKCON continue Lord Caitanya's movement by distributing the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the world.

Pronunciation

We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in b**u**t, long **ā** like the **a** in f**a**r (and held twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in ev**a**de, long **ī** like the **i** in p**i**que. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **ri**m, and **c** like the **ch** in **ch**air. Pronounce consonants like **ch**, **jh**, and **dh** as in staun**ch-h**eart, hed**ge-h**og, and re**d-h**ot. Pronounce **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

Spiritual Names

ISKCON members receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or his great devotees, combined with Dāsa, for men, or Dāsī, for women, both of which mean "servant." For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

is Jagāi and Mādhāi.” The brothers Jagāi and Mādhāi were great debauchees. Though born in a *brāhmaṇa* family, they became woman-hunters and drunkards and cheaters. But Nityānanda Prabhu delivered them, and they became first-class Vaiṣṇavas.

Five hundred years ago, to become a drunkard was most abominable, especially in the higher section of Hindu society. But now it has become a fashion. So if you want to advance the position of society or of the country, which is now full of the sinful and the suffering (*pāpī-tāpī*), you have to accept the process of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. That is practically being manifested. These European and American boys are also the same type – Jagāi and Mādhāi. That is a fact. They were at least. Now they are not. How have they been delivered? The same process: by chanting the holy name. *Pāpī-tāpī jata chilo, hari-nāme uddhārilo.*

Introduce the offenseless chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra,* and then the world situation will improve very much.

This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is so important, and there are practical results. Introduce the offenseless chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra,* and then the world situation will improve very much. That’s a fact. And it is being actually enacted in the present position. We are sending our men from village to village in Europe and America. We are taking advantage of the modern facilities. We are using the microphone for chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, we are using nice buses, cars, and vans to go from village to village to distribute books and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.

One of the leaders is present here, Śrīmān Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī. He is controlling about one dozen buses. And here is Haṁsadūta also. He is doing the same in Germany. We have introduced this as Caitanya Mahāprabhu ordered: *pṛthivīte āche yata nagarādi-grāma* . . . : “In every town and village of the world, the chanting of My name will be heard.” (*Caitanya-bhāgavata, Antya* 4.126)

Throughout the whole world, in as many villages and towns as there are, this *saṅkīrtana* movement should be introduced. And especially in India, because in India the people are generally Kṛṣṇa conscious. By artificial means they are trying to forget Kṛṣṇa. This is the position. This should be stopped. They have a natural tendency to become Kṛṣṇa conscious. Therefore in these days, still so many hundreds and thousands of people come to Vrindavan to relish the transcendental mellow of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Now the foreigners are also attracted to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and I am trying to place them in our temples. This temple is one of them. We have four or five temples in India. We are constructing a big temple in Hyderabad, and we are getting a good response.

Take the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement Seriously

It is our request to the leaders of society and to the people of India that they take this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, very seriously. It will be good for everyone, and the whole world will become peaceful. We do not expect that throughout the whole world everyone will take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But if even five percent, two percent, three percent of the people take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, that will be a great example.

Our only request is this simple thing:

harer nāma harer nāma
harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva
nāsty eva gatir anyathā

“In this Age of Kali there is no other means, no other means, no other means for self-realization than chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name of Lord Hari.” (*Bṛhan-nāradīya-purāṇa* 3.8.126) This is the formula of the *śāstra,* the Vedic scriptures. And you will be surprised. I invite you to come to our centers in Europe and America, and you will see how they are chanting and dancing before the deities of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda or Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Recently I have been to Atlanta for the first time. The boys and the girls there have taken three big, big houses. The middle house has been transformed into a temple. How nicely they are chanting and dancing! You will be surprised if you go.

This movement is undoubtedly increasing in the foreign countries, and why not in our country? The government, the leaders, and the guardians should deeply contemplate on the serious nature of this movement and help us. We are bringing men from the foreign countries to preach. How long shall I bring them? We want to spread this movement all over India very seriously, and we invite educated, intellectual young men to come forward to study this movement. It is not blind sentiment; we have books. We have already published about fifty books on this movement. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s movement is meant for both kinds of men: The ordinary men without any education, even the illiterate, can take to it, and the most advanced scientists, philosophers, philanthropists, politicians can take to it. We are helping in both ways. Those who are educated scientists, philosophers, for them we have volumes of books. And those who are not educated

(*please turn to page 51*)

Glossary

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Ācārya—a spiritual master who teaches by example.

Balarāma—Lord Kṛṣṇa's first expansion, who acts in the role of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother.

Battle of Kurukshetra—an epic battle for rule of the world, fought five thousand years ago.

Bhagavad-gītā—the sacred book in which Lord Kṛṣṇa gives the essence of knowledge to His friend and disciple Arjuna. (Cited as *Gītā*.)

Bhakti—devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Bhakti-yoga—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared five hundred years ago to teach the chanting of the names of God as the religion for the present age.

Darśana—"viewing," audience with a deity or saintly person.

Dharma—(1) ordained duties or religious principles; (2) one's eternal, natural occupation (i.e., devotional service to the Lord).

Godhead—the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Reality, progressively realized first as the impersonal all-pervasive oneness, more fully as the Supersoul within the heart of every living being, and ultimately as the all-opulent Supreme Person.

Gurukula—a school where children learn the philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with regular academic subjects (literally "the place of the guru").

Hare Kṛṣṇa—the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

ISKCON—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Japa—individual chanting of names of God, usually while counting on beads.

Kali-yuga—in the endlessly repeated cycle of four cosmic ages, the present and worst age, the Age of Quarrel, of which 5,000 of 432,000 years have passed.

Karma—material action; its inevitable reaction; or the law by which such action and reaction are governed.

Kīrtana—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).

Kṛṣṇa—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendental form (see "Godhead").

Mahābhārata—the epic history of ancient India, a history in which the *Bhagavad-gītā* appears as the most important and well-known text.

Māyā—illusion; the energy of the Supreme Lord that deludes living entities into forgetting their spiritual nature and forgetting God.

Māyāvādī—one who regards the Absolute Truth as ultimately impersonal.

Modes of nature—the three qualities (goodness, passion, and ignorance) that hold sway over all action in the material world.

Nityānanda—the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Prasāda—vegetarian food that has been prepared for the Lord and offered to Him with devotion.

Purāṇas—Vedic histories.

Rādhārāṇī—Lord Kṛṣṇa's consort and pleasure potency.

Rathayātrā—"chariot festival": a festival in which the form of Kṛṣṇa is borne in procession on a large canopy-topped chariot or float, especially the festival originating in Puri, India, for Jagannātha (Lord Kṛṣṇa, "the Lord of the universe").

Sannyāsa—the renounced life of a man who relinquishes home to dedicate himself fully to the Supreme.

Śāstra—scriptures, especially the Vedic scriptures of India.

Śrī—an honorific meaning "opulent" (similarly: Śrīla, Śrīmad, Śrīmān, Śrīmatī).

Śrīla Prabhupāda—His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam—the most important of the eighteen *Purāṇas,* which tells of the nature and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees. (Cited as *Bhāg.*)

Supersoul—the form of the Lord who resides in every heart along with the individual soul.

Vaiṣṇava—a devotee of the Supreme Lord (from the word *Viṣṇu*).

Varṇāśrama—the Vedic social system. It organizes society into four occupational and four spiritual divisions (*varṇas* and *āśramas*). The members of the four *varṇas* are the *brāhmaṇas* (intellectuals and priests), the *kṣatriyas* (administrators and soldiers), the *vaiśyas* (farmers and businessmen), and the *śūdras* (laborers and artisans). The members of the four *āśramas* are the *brahmacārīs* (celibate students), *gṛhasthas* (married people), *vānaprasthas* (retired people), and *sannyāsīs* (renunciants).

Vedas—the hymns of knowledge revealed by the Lord Himself at the beginning of creation.

Vedic—pertaining to the culture in which the *Vedas* and related scriptures guide all aspects of human life.

Viṣṇu—any form of the Personality of Godhead (see "Godhead"); the forms the Lord manifests to create and sustain the material world.

Vṛndāvana—the transcendental abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, mirrored on earth as the town in India where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.

ABHAY CHARAN

A Special Gift

When a couple's unborn child is diagnosed with a life-threatening condition, they turn to Lord Kṛṣṇa's devotees for guidance.

by Ananta Vallabha Dāsa

WHEN WE learned that my wife, Vaishnavi, was pregnant, it was joyous news. We went through wonderful emotions and sweet feelings in considering how to welcome the new soul into our lives. And like all expectant parents, we looked forward to the day when the delivering doctor would say, "Congratulations!"

We started regularly visiting Vaishnavi's gynecologist, a pious, sweet, gentle lady, and every visit made us curious to know about the little one inside the womb. At two and a half months we were advised to get a scan done, and the reports were normal. We were thrilled to hear the baby's heartbeat.

In the fifth month, the doctor suggested an anomaly scan, a thorough ultrasound scan of the baby's anatomy. Friends and relatives had shared their experience of having seen their babies' features for the first time in this scan, and this excited us to go for it.

The scan generally takes ten to fifteen minutes, but the doctor doing the scan continued for more than half an hour, and then suddenly left the room without a word. I ran behind to ask him what happened. He said that the baby had a serious problem: The heart was pushed to the right. He recommended getting the same scan done by a famous senior radiologist. My extreme happiness quickly turned into distress. I didn't inform my concerned wife, and managed

Baby: ©iStockphoto.com | NickS. Hand in beadbag and montage: Yamarāja Dāsa.

to hold the burning news until the next scan.

Desperate to know the situation of the fetus, with great difficulty we got an appointment with the famous doctor. Our hearts sped as our turn approached, the inevitable array of thoughts rushing through our minds.

After a few minutes of scanning, the radiologist said, "Your baby has a problem. Visit your gynecologist at the earliest with this report, and she should tell you what needs to be done."

After seeing our gynecologist, she called us to say, "Sorry to say this – your baby is suffering from congenital diaphragmatic hernia (CDH), and I recommend termination."

Oh, God! We were shattered.

> **Desperate to know the situation of the fetus, with great difficulty we got an appointment with the famous doctor.**

Tears flowed like rain from my wife's eyes, and I was dumbstruck. I didn't know what to say. After a long pause, I asked the doctor, "Is there no cure for this?"

The doctor explained in detail. Because of a hole in the diaphragm, the stomach and intestines had gone to the chest, pushing the heart to the right and stopping the growth of the left lung. Generally the lung develops in early gestation, but our baby's lung was not growing. There was no guarantee the baby could breathe once it came out, so termination, the doctor said, was a good option for this kind of anomaly.

Generally problems like CDH are diagnosed in the third trimester or later, but as our baby was diagnosed early, the doctor was sure the baby would have serious complications.

We had never heard of CDH, and the doctor's advice left us blank. Though we knew that termination is sinful, we didn't know how to react to the dreadful situation. Still, we told the doctor we were not ready to allow this sinful act at any cost.

The doctor patiently but firmly replied, "I agree with you, but the baby may not survive. Or it might survive for a few hours, days, or months. It will have to undergo many surgeries and feel much pain. You will have to see all of this. And you will have to spend a lot of money, knowing very well that the baby will not survive. Continuing the baby's life is not a very practical idea. Both of you are young, it's your first conception, and you can have another child soon if you wish."

Despite having a number of questions, we couldn't speak for a while. I told the doctor her words made lot of sense and requested some time to get back to her.

"I understand your anxiety," the doctor replied. "If you decide to terminate, please get back to me in two days because the baby has already completed four months in the womb and later it'll be too late for the termination procedure."

We went home with heavy hearts. I tried consoling my wife but miserably failed. She was suffering the agony of having carried a baby and being unsure of its survival. Her pregnancy had become a trauma. The news ended our happy thoughts of becoming a father and a mother. Vaishnavi could now feel the baby's movements. What should have been moments of joy only added to her emotional turmoil.

I tried to console her: Kṛṣṇa has a great lesson to teach us, I said, so He has put us in this situation. This is a result of our past karma, and we have to face the consequences. If Kṛṣṇa wants to protect the baby, nobody can harm it; if Kṛṣṇa wants to take away the baby, nobody can protect it.

I always used to tell my wife: The difference between life and a teacher is that a teacher teaches the lesson and then gives the test but life gives the test and then teaches the lesson. So we should be always prepared to learn the lesson.

Seeking Guidance

In our community of devotees, we have a counselor system in which devotees who have spent considerable years in Kṛṣṇa consciousness share their experience and guidance (which they have received from their seniors) to those eagerly desiring to learn and practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness systematically. We decided to call our counselor. We were prepared to accept his guidance; it might be difficult, but Kṛṣṇa would be pleased if we followed our authorities. We took some time, discussed a lot, and decided to follow whatever he told us to do.

Our counselor was astonished and asked for time to consider a solution. After half an hour he called back and sweetly, with great conviction and crystal-clear understanding, explained why we should not terminate. I took the role of a materialist and told him the strong reasons for termination, but he was able to persuade us with a lot of scriptural understanding as well as examples of devotees who had faced similar situations. In the end, we were happy to continue the pregnancy in the right spirit.

Our counselor and other senior devotees were instrumental in giving us the philosophical viewpoint. We were told that it is Kṛṣṇa's plan and we are nobody to interfere. No one knows what exactly is the baby's future. The Lord has a special plan for this soul, and therefore He has chosen this womb according to our karma. It is our duty to take care of this soul sent by Kṛṣṇa. Whether the baby is going to survive for a few years, months, weeks, days, hours, or even minutes, we should try to give Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the baby to our best capacity. That is the duty of every parent.

We were fortunate to get excellent timely guidance from many senior devotees, to whom we are very grateful and obliged.

Our spiritual master, His Holiness Rādhānātha Swami, who was thousands of miles away, wrote to us, giving us hope, strength, and the right attitude to face the situation. He said he would offer his heartfelt prayers to the Lord to shower His grace upon us. He gave us insight on how sometimes in this world we are put through difficult challenges. By passing these challenges with patience and integrity, and by sincerely taking shelter of the Lord, we'll be blessed in a special way. His words were like a rope for a man drowning in the sea.

Our parents were also against termination, but were moved to see what we had to undergo. They encouraged us to take the situation in a positive spirit.

Now we were convinced beyond any doubt. We went back to the doctor.

"Nothing doing," we said. "We are going to continue the pregnancy, and we need your blessings and support."

The doctor was stuck with wonder to see our bold decision, knowing well the risk for the baby. She tried to convince us by again stressing the expected critical consequences to be faced. We got an opportunity to speak the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I explained the law of karma and why abortion is sinful.

She was happy to know our view and said, "You have so much faith in God. I will also pray to God to give the best result."

The Moment Arrives

The baby successfully completed nine months. My wife was admitted to the hospital on December 11, 2012, the day for the baby to come into this world. Our gynecologist had informed the neonatologists of the situation, and other doctors were ready with the ventilator, oxygen, and all other requirements.

We had successfully pleaded with the doctor to allow a recording of Hare Kṛṣṇa chanting in the delivery room, and that gave Vaishnavi strength. My in-laws, my mother, and a devotee couple were with me to give moral support. I prayed, chanted, and hoped for the best.

After an hour, the neonatologists came out with the baby in an incubator. I saw the baby struggling to breathe. Tears – which I had controlled for many months – rolled down from my eyes as I looked at the small baby inside the incubator, unable to breathe and struggling for its life.

Vaishnavi had been eagerly awaiting the moment when she could hold the baby in her arms as soon as it was born, but that didn't happen. She could only see the baby nearby, and it had to be immediately given oxygen and other essentials. From the minute the baby was born it was under observation. The doctors had told us that the first cry was important, as the baby had to breathe on its own. As soon as my wife heard the baby cry, her tears were irrepressible, and she had hope.

The baby – a boy, I was told – was taken into the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). I ran to see my wife's status. She was still inside the delivery room. After a long time she came out, obviously exhausted.

She held my hand and asked, "How is the baby?"

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Controlling my tears I said, "He is fine, and he looks like me," as she had wanted the baby to look like me.

She was happy, but sad to hear that the baby was inside the NICU, struggling to breathe.

The Wait

The NICU doctors told us the baby was breathing only ten percent by himself and using ninety percent ventilator support. Once he stabilized by using only fifty percent ventilator support, they would take him for surgery. Until then, he would be in the NICU under critical care.

Only my wife and I were allowed inside the NICU. It was unbearable for us to see the baby in that stage, but we wanted to be with him.

Vaishnavi was taken to the recovery ward while the baby was under the care of the NICU. Many wonderful devotees came to the hospital every evening. Our discussions of Kṛṣṇa gave me lot of inspiration in overcoming my anxiety. I took shelter of them.

After a week, the pediatric surgeons decided to operate. The baby had stabilized somewhat, and they couldn't wait any longer. The doctors asked us to pray to God. They would try their best, they said, and they took him away.

Left with a couple of devotee friends and in-laws, with great fretfulness I sincerely chanted the holy names. I had no other choice.

After two hours the surgeon came and said, "No need to worry. The baby is fine. Because he was diagnosed with CDH during early pregnancy, we thought the lung might have not developed well, but the baby's lung is better than what we expected with our experience. We wonder how it is so."

I was shocked and speechless – and eager to see the little one.

After the surgery, the baby was again taken to the NICU for post-operative care. He was there for a fortnight and in the hospital for almost a month. Every day we had to face a lot of turmoil. When the baby started getting better day by day, he was finally discharged.

The ordeal was a thorny phase of our life. Though we had the satisfaction of having taken the right step, we had no choice but to undergo what was in store for us. Our only option was to pray, pray, and pray. At times we were perplexed about what to pray for, and left things in Kṛṣṇa's and guru's hands. And what we suffered can't compare with the heartfelt prayers of our guru, many devotees, and near and dear ones.

Today we are the happy and satisfied parents of an adorable sweet little boy who by God's grace is like any other healthy baby. We can say that our child is made of prayers. Prayers never go unheard; we get more than what we deserve. We can't imagine our life outside the association of devotees and our guru, without whose help we couldn't have made the right decision.

We went to see our gynecologist, who was very happy to see the baby.

With tears in her eyes she said, "God does exist, and God will protect His devotees."

Our spiritual master blessed the baby by giving him the name Abhay Charan, a special gift because it is the birth name of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

My wife and I wish to express our sincere gratitude to our spiritual master, senior devotees, all family members – all who guided and supported us. Our child is a special gift, and we have no words to thank all the devotees, relatives, and friends who continuously prayed for him. Only because of their prayers was Abhay Charan able to fight such a big battle.

We would also like to express our sincere thanks to Śrīla Prabhupāda, who created a revolution in our lives by giving us a great opportunity and educating us in how to live a sinless and pure life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Ananta Vallabha Dāsa and his family are part of the devotee community of ISKCON Sri Jagannath Mandir, Sripuram, Bangalore.

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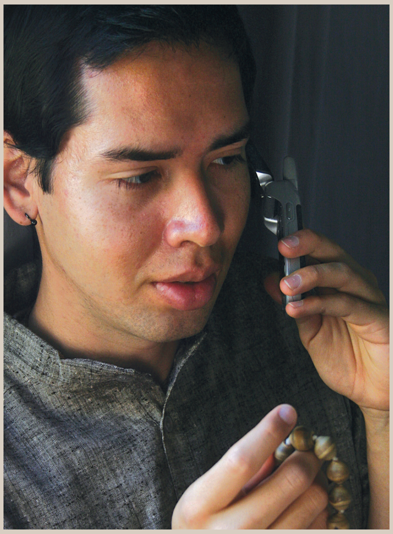

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For information, contact Rasāla Kṛṣṇa Dāsa by email at rasala108@gmail.com or online at www.iskconnj.com/japa, or call (732) 501-1018 (evenings, New Jersey).

HOW I CAME TO KṚṢṆA CONSCIOUSNESS

They Won, I Lost

His mother's cultural training and his wife's sincere prayers diverted his blind march forward and brought him to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.

by Surendra Singh Saukhanda

LIFE CENTERED on religion was common in India until a few decades back, and I happened to take birth in a religious family. My father had participated in India's freedom struggle. A man of great discipline and integrity, he acted without greed and envy and was always inclined toward social welfare. My mother, too, was a role model in our village. She taught everyone the importance of saintly association and the need to take shelter of scriptures like the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* Daily she would gather elderly ladies at our house and relish discussing the timeless message of the *Gītā* and the *Bhāgavatam.*

Among my siblings and me, my parent's four sons, not one of us took serious interest in religion and spirituality. I never considered God-realization to be the ultimate goal of life. Spiritual life and religious rituals, I thought, should be pursued when one gets old. Our lack of interest in religion caused extreme pain to our mother, and she would often wonder how anyone born of her womb could be so apathetic about religious life. Frustrated at her failed attempts to convince us, she would direct her anger towards God.

"O God! Why didn't You give me even one son who takes pleasure in chanting Your holy names and performing Your devotional service?"

We were always engrossed in frivolous sports and abominable habits. It seemed she wouldn't live to see even one son grow to be a saintly person, her dream.

The author and his wife.

The First Step Towards Transformation

My wife, Rajkala Devi, showed an equal disinterest in religious matters. Although she would attend religious functions held in her village, her main purpose was to entertain herself with some singing and dancing – that's all. But one day, in 2008, she met an ISKCON devotee who hailed from our village. He was trying to establish Kṛṣṇa consciousness there, and Rajkala Devi was very much influenced by him. She immediately adopted the devotional principles wholeheartedly and repeatedly urged me to take them up too.

"Come on," she would say, "take to spiritual life. Understand who you are and your relationship with God. Why don't you come with me? They are such nice people."

I couldn't understand this sudden turn of events in my life.

Finally I decided to give it a try; I agreed to visit the weekly program. But when I reached the venue, I found hardly a dozen people assembled. And I noticed that most of them were not "up to my level." Having worked with the Delhi Municipal Corporation, I had an image of myself as being superior, and so I thought I wouldn't be able to relate to this group of people.

Some doubts, however, kept bothering me. The last time I had visited Vrindavan, I'd seen many foreigners at the ISKCON temple, so I had concluded that ISKCON was managed by Westerners. I had wondered why these people took so much interest in Indian culture. But I never tried to go deep into it and really find out. Previous misconceptions also played their role.

They are hippies, I thought. *They rarely bathe. They are crazy and always intoxicated with drugs.*

Upon seeing the Hare Kṛṣṇas, images of drug-intoxicated hippies chanting "Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Rāma" and scenes of how they forced people to buy their books would flash through my mind. In my mind, even Śrīla Prabhupāda, ISKCON's founder, appeared to have a Western outlook.

My Wife's Determination

Rajkala Devi continued her prayers, hoping to see my transformation. Often I would lose my temper and shout at her.

"You do whatever you want, but don't interfere in my business."

"My business" was to drink, smoke, and gamble while playing cards throughout the day. And the day would end with a chicken meal. Most of my life had gone in this way.

It seemed to me that my wife had taken the baton from my mother: She was now the one trying to convert me and make me a devotee. Although I had never raised my voice against my mother, I screamed and shouted at my wife without consideration. Feeling disturbed and hurt, she would remain silent for many days, but she never gave up hope. She was confident that one day I would come to my senses and eagerly take to spiritual life.

She then devised a plan: She would invite the ISKCON devotee to our home, and in front of him she would complain about me and request him to counsel me. Somehow I tolerated her taunts, but as soon as her guest left, I would lash out at her. Why did she have to insult me in front of an unknown guest? She would then lovingly pacify me by saying that her motive was not to insult me but to make me aware of the horrible consequences awaiting me. This would provoke me all the more, but she kept her courage until she gained her first breakthrough.

I decided to give up the company of "my friends" for good and vowed never to touch alcohol again in my life.

I had faith that she was concerned about my well-being, so I decided to give religion a try and experiment with her newfound life. For some time I accompanied her to the regular *satsaṅga* programs. The devotees there encouraged me.

"You are a welcome addition to our congregation. Seeing your example, so many people are joining our mission."

But after two months, my determination waned, and I again dove into alcoholic indulgence with my former friends.

A Sudden Change

My wife was disturbed; her dreams were dashed. I felt helpless; without my friends, life seemed worthless. I would get restless without a drink. My body was addicted to these pleasures, and my determination to give them up was weak. I was caught in a tug of war: On one side my addictions were dragging me to continue with my sensual indulgence, while on the other side my wife kept repeatedly pleading with me to change and reform. Fortunately, she prevailed because her words were packaged inside sincere prayers to Kṛṣṇa. And how could Kṛṣṇa ignore His devotee's pleas?

Suddenly my life took a drastic change.

One day, while enjoying drinks, I found myself in a heated argument with my friends. The issue got out of control, and they wanted to kill me. One of them threatened to shoot me down, but under the influence of alcohol I thought little of the threats, even challenging him to shoot me. I was unaware that he had left his gun at home, so I hadn't calculated the consequences of my challenge. After a few minutes everything cooled down and we all returned to our homes.

That night, while lying on my bed I heard a strange voice in my ears. I am not sure if I was dreaming, but the voice sounded like that of a demigoddess.

"If they had actually carried the gun," the voice said, "what would have happened to you?"

I pondered over that statement for a long time. Finally I decided to give up the company of "my friends" for good and vowed never to touch alcohol again in my life.

When I informed my wife about my decision, she couldn't believe her ears. She repeatedly thanked Kṛṣṇa and offered heartfelt prayers to Him for bringing about such a change in me. I decided to follow seriously all of my wife's directions. She gave me a set of beads and a copy of the Second Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* I started chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra regularly and attending the weekly discourses.

Regret and Gratitude

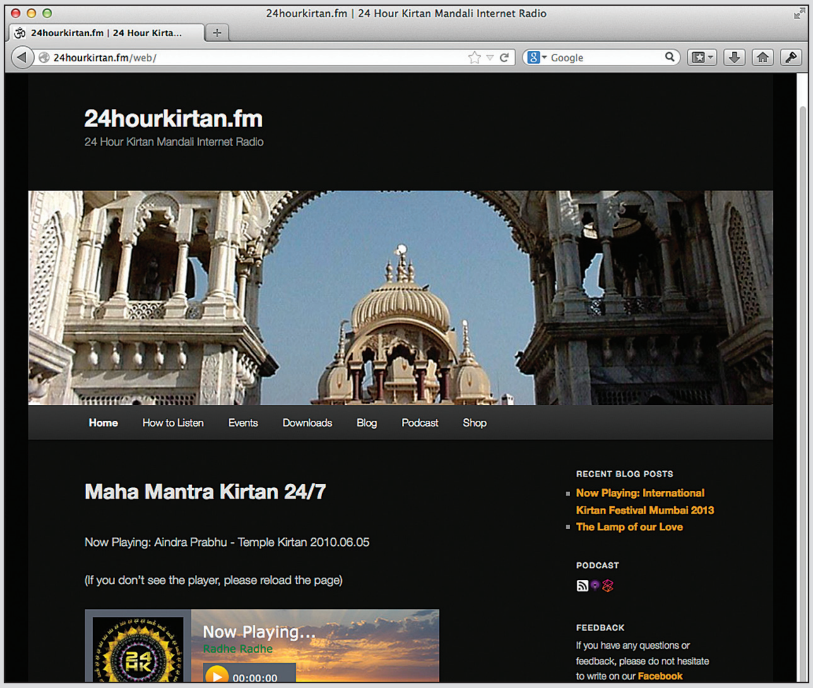
Having spent so many years in pursuit of false happiness, I now regret I didn't take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness much earlier in life. So much precious time wasted! But better late than never. Kṛṣṇa has awarded me *bhakti.* I now regularly chant sixteen rounds on my beads, attend devotional discourses, read Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, and worship Tulasī Devī at home. Last year for the first time I participated in the December book marathon, and I distributed more than two thousand copies of the *Bhagavad-gītā.* His Holiness Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami, in recognition of my service, kindly honored me by giving me an award.

I would like to acknowledge the contributions of four people who caused such a transformation in my life: my mother, whose training and prayers created positive devotional impressions in me; my wife, whose sincere prayers led to my transformation; Sudāmā Dāsa from ISKCON Mumbai, who continuously guided me in my devotional practices and reminded me of the temporary nature of life; and Madhumaṅgala Dāsa from ISKCON Delhi, whose discourses solidified my faith in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

I can feel that my enthusiasm and strength are increasing day by day. There is no question of turning back and resuming my old way of life. Lord Kṛṣṇa has undoubtedly showered His causeless mercy upon me. My only prayer is that I can continue to serve Him and please Him in whatever way possible. ❁

e-Krishna

Profiles of Kṛṣṇa-related websites



Maha Mantra Kirtan 24/7

Now Playing: Aindra Prabhu - Temple Kirtan 2010.06.05

(If you don't see the player, please reload the page)

- Now Playing: International Kirtan Festival Mumbai 2013
- The Lamp of our Love

If you have any questions or feedback, please do not hesitate to write on our Facebook

24hourkirtan.fm is the website of an Internet radio station called 24 Hour Kirtan Mandali Radio. The station plays *kīrtanas* recorded live at the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir in Vrindavan, India, as well as *kīrtanas* recorded at events and programs around the world.

Internet radio lets you tune in to your favorite music wherever you have Internet access. You can listen in on your home computer or on your mobile phone.

When the 24hourkirtan.fm home page loads in your Internet browser, a software player appears on screen and the latest *kīrtana* stream starts playing. A button on the player lets you stop and start the music, and you use your computer volume controls.

Click on the How to Listen button on the navigation bar to discover the ways you can listen to the music stream. There is a mobile App you can download to your phone that allows you to listen to the live recordings at any location.

On your computer, you can also tune in using iTunes, SHOUTcast, or Winamp. These are software applications you download to your computer that can access Kirtan Mandali Radio while you use your browser to access other websites. You will find instructions for these on the How to Listen page.

Clicking on the Events button reveals a list of *kīrtana* programs around the world that play on Kirtan Mandali Radio. If you click on the title of any event, the associated web page will open. You can read about each event and access video and audio of the *kīrtanas*. At the bottom of the Events page you can subscribe to the calendar to stay up-to-date with the latest in *kīrtana* events around the world.

The Download page provides links to get your own copies of the *kīrtanas* you are listening to. You can play these offline whenever you like and share them with friends.

On the Blog page are articles about some of the *kīrtanas* playing on the website. There is a list of links in the left column where you can access archives of previous blogs.

The Podcast page has links to audio interviews, talks, and lectures about *kīrtana.*

Kirtan Mandali Radio has a booth at Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir, home of the 24-hour *kīrtana,* as well as a Facebook page and a Twitter feed where you can keep in touch with what is coming up in the radio stream.

—Antony Brennan

Why Is the Bhagavad-gītā So Pessimistic?

Four points to consider regarding Lord Kṛṣṇa's characterization of life in the material world.

by Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa

BHAGAVAD GITA
AS IT IS

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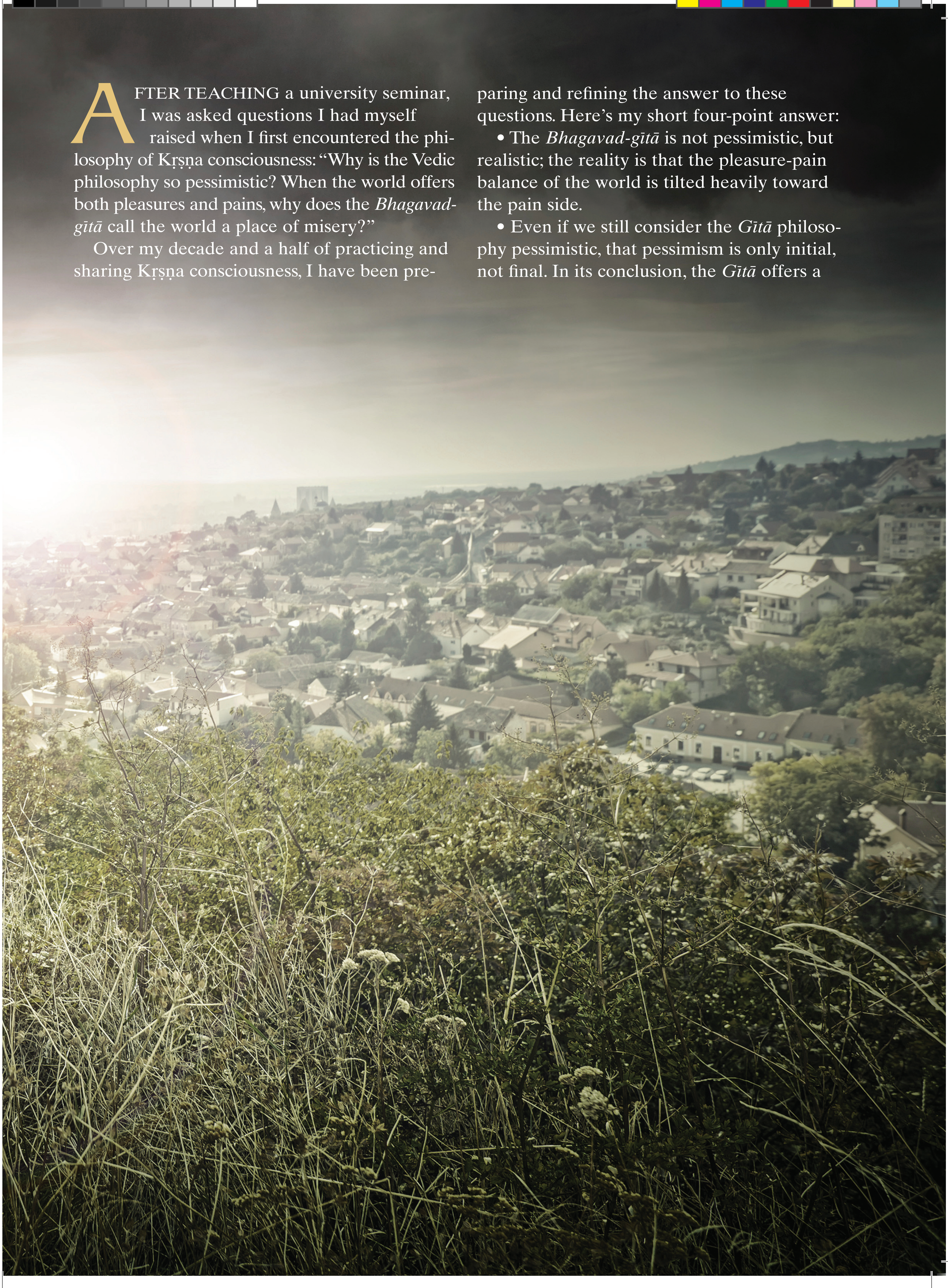
AFTER TEACHING a university seminar, I was asked questions I had myself raised when I first encountered the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness: "Why is the Vedic philosophy so pessimistic? When the world offers both pleasures and pains, why does the *Bhagavad-gītā* call the world a place of misery?"

Over my decade and a half of practicing and sharing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I have been preparing and refining the answer to these questions. Here's my short four-point answer:

- The *Bhagavad-gītā* is not pessimistic, but realistic; the reality is that the pleasure-pain balance of the world is tilted heavily toward the pain side.
- Even if we still consider the *Gītā* philosophy pessimistic, that pessimism is only initial, not final. In its conclusion, the *Gītā* offers a



supremely optimistic message.

- Even the best worldly optimism pales and fails in front of the longing of our heart, a longing fully satisfied by following the *Gītā*.
- The *Gītā* doesn't teach us to reject this world for the spiritual world, but to harmonize this world with the spiritual world.

Let's look at these points systematically.

DIVE into Misery

We can get insight into the pleasure-pain balance of the world by examining the pleasure-pain balance of our body, through which we primarily experience the world. For this discussion, I'll use the acronym DIVE.

Duration: The pleasures the body can give us, such as in eating or mating, last only for a few minutes. However, the pains the body can give us, such as chronic back problems or arthritis or cancer, can last for years.

Intensity: The body is far more pain-sensitive than pleasure-sensitive. If we are lying comfortably on a bed, being massaged by soothing, soft hands, one pinprick in one part of the body will bring an intensity of pain that exceeds the intensity of the pleasure experienced in all other parts of the body.

Variety: The ways in which the body can give us pleasure are few, whereas the ways in which it can give us pain are many, even innumerable. The eyes can give us pleasure primarily by seeing attractive objects, but they can give us pain by being hit, pierced, or gouged, or by becoming inflamed, infected, or blinded by a myriad variety of diseases.

Extent: A few bodily parts can give us pleasure, primarily the sensory organs like the eyes, ears, and skin, whereas many – nay, all – the bodily parts can give us pain. Except in a general way by contributing to a healthy body, none of the internal organs like the kidney or liver or spine can give us pleasure, yet all of them can give us excruciating pain by becoming diseased in numerous ways.

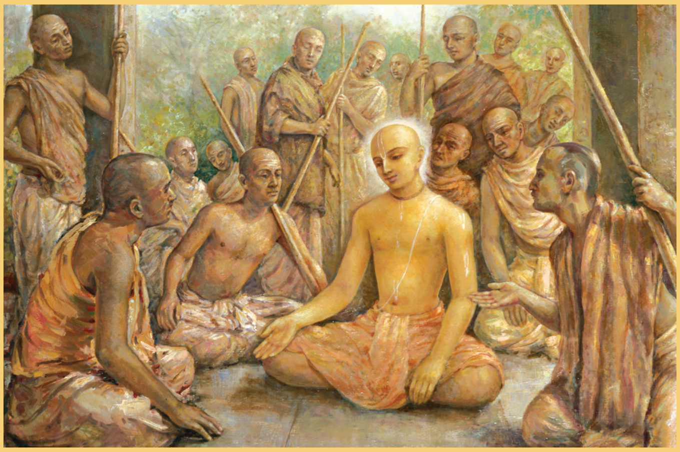
This analysis shows that the body's pleasure-pain balance, and by extension the world's pleasure-pain balance, is tilted heavily toward the pain side. That's why, with unsentimental candor, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.9.25) declares the material body to be *aśeṣa-rujāṁ virohaḥ,* the breeding place for unlimited diseases and miseries, and the *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.15) declares the material world to be *duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam,* a place of misery where the little happiness we may achieve by our most optimistic attitudes and actions is stripped away due to its inescapably temporary nature.

When the Worst Takes Us to the Best

The *Bhagavad-gītā's* essential message, though, is not pessimistic, but optimistic. It points us to the eternal spiritual world, where we as indestructible souls can reclaim our destiny of everlasting happiness. To ensure that we don't miss out on that glorious destiny due to the futile hope for happiness in this world, it candidly proclaims the true nature of this world as a place of misery. Here's an analogy to understand this strategy.

Consider a person diagnosed with a serious cancer that is curable, but only through rigorous chemotherapy. The patient may initially flinch when told about the severe treatment, but may become ready for the treatment when clearly told about the two choices: an excruciating, gradual, inevitable death, or a demanding treatment that leads

A Pause for Prayer



Detail from a painting by Praśānta Dāsa

LET ME TAKE shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who has descended in the form of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach us real knowledge, His devotional service, and detachment from whatever does not foster Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He has descended because He is an ocean of transcendental mercy. Let me surrender unto His lotus feet.

Śrī Kavi-karṇapūra
Caitanya-candrodaya-nāṭaka 6.74

to recovery. When faced with a grave problem, the way to the best-case result often begins by having a hard look at the worst-case scenario.

The Vedic texts apply this same principle to our current material existence. They explain that presently all of us are diseased; we are eternal souls afflicted with amnesia. Though we are entitled to a blissful, everlasting life in devotional service to God, due to misidentifying with our temporary material bodies we have to suffer unnecessarily the miseries of old age, disease, death, and rebirth – again and again. The "bright" side of life – the enjoyment of worldly pleasures – blinds us to these harsh facts of life and fills us with the hopeless hope that some temporary adjustments within our material existence will free us from suffering. Thus, the "bright" side of life perpetuates our dark, diseased existence.

Most of us get so caught up with pursuing the "bright" side of life that we forget or neglect its miseries and so lose the opportunity to cure ourselves. Curing ourselves requires a spiritual therapy wherein we expose ourselves to spiritual God-centered stimuli like the holy names, the saintly devotees, the sacred scriptures, the beautiful deities, and the sanctified remnants of food offered to God (*prasāda*). Unlike chemotherapy, which is painful from beginning to end, this spiritual therapy seems to be painful in the beginning, but turns out to be joyful after a little practice (*Gītā* 18.37). In fact, the therapy, if practiced in the association of caring and competent devotee guides, can be joyful right from the beginning. However, experiencing that joy requires committed and sustained practice, a price that most of us are highly reluctant to pay. Therefore, the Vedic texts offer us an unsentimental, uncompromising look at the two options before us: miseries throughout life that are repeated for many future lives, or a devotional therapy that requires commitment now but restores us to our eternal, blissful, natural life. When we're faced with these facts, our reluctance to take up the spiritual therapy evaporates, and thus the door to eternal life opens.

This profoundly wise Vedic strategy is evident in the progressive flow of the *Bhagavad-gītā:* It initially declares this world to be an unchangeably miserable place and eventually reveals the potential within each one of us to attain divine happiness. Thus, the initial pessimism of Vedic philosophy is the essential beginning that leads to its ultimate optimism.

Don't Underestimate Reality

Talk of the spiritual world may invite the question "Isn't this longing for another world filled with happiness an attempt to escape from reality?"

The initial pessimism of Vedic philosophy is the essential beginning that leads to its ultimate optimism.

Yes, spiritual life is an attempt to escape – not *from* reality, but *to* reality.

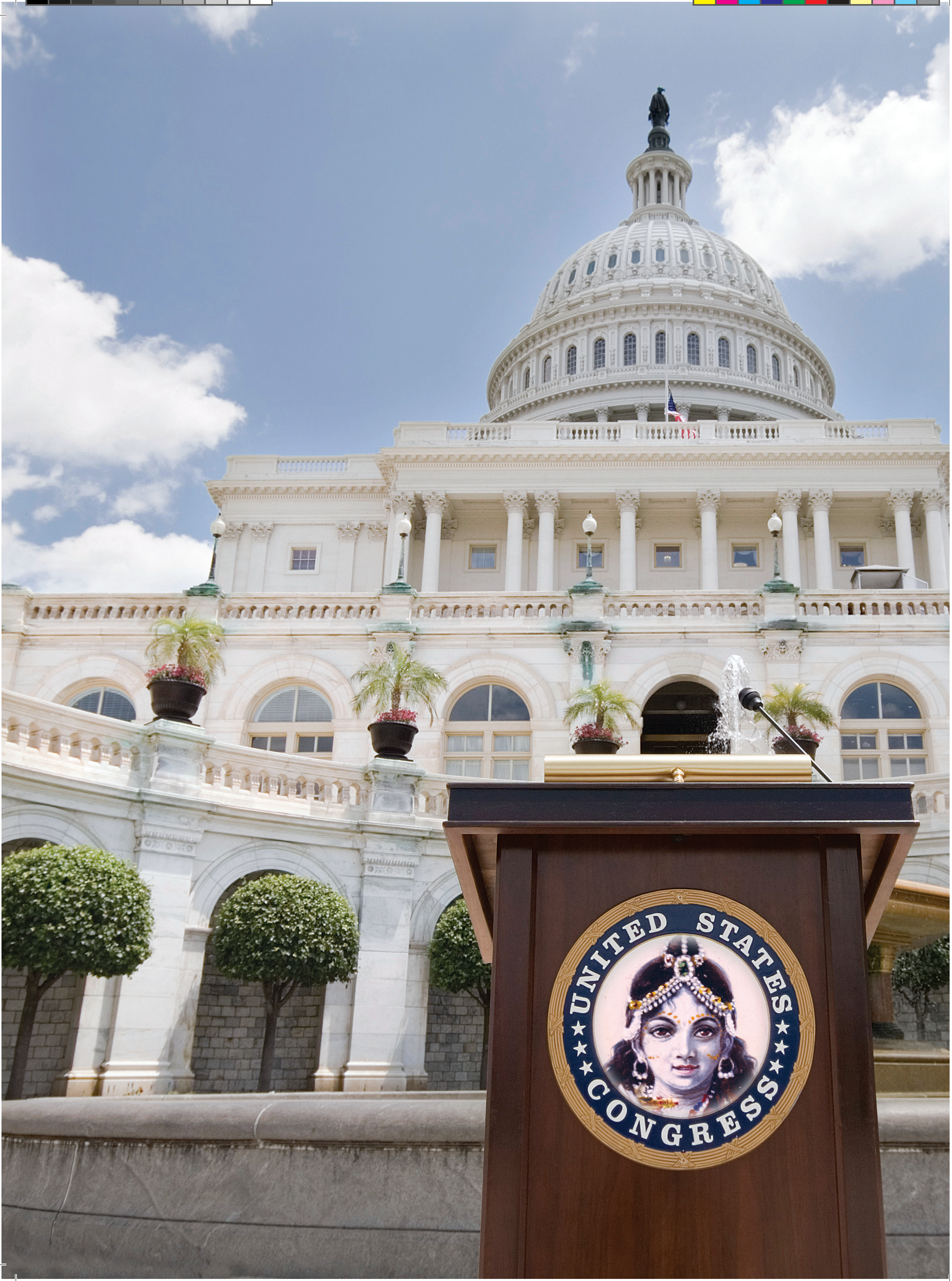
Let us objectively examine what people consider real life. It is the life of perpetual struggle from the womb to the tomb. It is a struggle against backbreaking pressure – sometimes literally, such as under the weight of schoolbags, and always figuratively. We struggle against the pressure of others' expectations, against cutthroat competition for employment, against family disharmony and hot and cold domestic wars, against the aging body, and ultimately against the death sentence inherent in our mortal bodies. Amidst all these struggles, we busy ourselves in complicated versions of the animalistic pursuits of eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. The uncertainty of success in these pursuits stresses us constantly, and the hope for getting some success is what we call optimism. But we can't wish away the illnesses, aging, and death of our body. Even when distresses don't overwhelm us, our life gets so boring that more patients visit psychiatrists because of boredom than because of distress. Even the most optimistic attitude can do little to change this unpalatable but undeniable ground reality: the miserable nature of material existence.

How have we defined as real life a life so inane, so pointless, so disappointing, so deadening? How have we been deceived into accepting as real such a pathetically low estimation of our human potential? Let's understand with an analogy.

When people desire to play a virtual-reality video game, that desire divorces them from the reality of their identity and propels them into an illusory cyber-world where they experience artificial emotions by misidentifying with a video-game character. Similarly, the *Bhagavad-gītā* (13.22) describes that when we desire to enjoy material things, that desire divorces us from the reality of our spiritual identity and propels us into the illusory material world, where we experience artificial emotions due to misidentifying with our material bodies. However, unlike a video game, our material misidentification is neither casual nor pleasant; it gives us insignificant pleasure and significant pain.

When, by good fortune, we somehow realize this flawed and doomed nature of our illusory pursuit, that realization awakens within us the desire to end our divorce from reality. And the more we give up illusory pleasure and the hyper-illusory optimism that keeps us

(*please turn to page 51*)


UNITED STATES
CONGRESS

Capitol building: ©iStockphoto.com | qingwa. Portrait of Kṛṣṇa: Detail from a painting by Yadurāṇī Devī Dāsī. Montage: Yamarāja Dāsa.

Toward Kṛṣṇa Conscious Governance

A clarion call for devotees and like-minded people to come together and, by Kṛṣṇa conscious governance, save the world from its precarious condition – before it is too late.

by Indra Kṛṣṇa Dāsa

LITTLE AHMED stretches his small hands to beg. By his side, his littler brother cries in pain and his mother hides her face in shame. Bombed out buildings give an eerie backdrop to what was previously a respectable locality. I turn the pages of the newspaper. On another page, a woman cries over the dead body of her husband.

The media is full of news of struggles, war, and bloodshed. In many Arab countries, governments and the rebels, most of them supported by foreign powers, are at war, and mass killings are common. The Arab Spring brought hopes of better governance. Many abusive rulers had to leave, and those who survived gave major concessions to their people. But the spring turned into an autumn of despair as conditions worsened, chaos prevailed (and still prevails), and millions turned into refugees overnight.

Now India, the last bastion of *sanātana-dharma* – the eternal religion of service to God – is nearing a history-defining election this year. The oldest civilization, which has an available history dating back millions of years and which nurtured the highest aspirations of humanity, is now a pale shadow of its former self. The land of fabulous riches, of glorious traditions, of social and religious tolerance, of rich cultural and spiritual heritage, is brought to its knees by corruption, malgovernance, and neglect. What one now sees is poverty, illiteracy, insecurity, crumbling infrastructure, and governmental apathy. With the opposition strongly raising the issues of *suśāsana* (good governance), *svābhimāna* (self-respect) and *vikāśa* (all-round sustainable development), all eyes are on this crucial election with a hope for better governance.

In Africa, thousands are killed regularly in feuds between warring warlords fighting like stray dogs over a piece of bone, the “flesh” having been taken by multinational companies supported by governments from the first world. The continent with the most natural resources has one of the world’s poorest, most uneducated, and most uncivilized people – people helplessly watching the so-called civilized world take away their resources in front of their eyes. Any dissent is ruthlessly dealt with; the life of an African is cheap.

The first world, beneficiary of the politics of exploitation, looks heavenlike in comparison. Yet governments that follow humane policies in their own countries unleash the most nefarious schemes, draconian laws, unscrupulous financial institutions, secret agencies, arms aid, and more, to loot and maim the third world. To hold on to their power, first-world rulers pamper their own population with promises of prosperity beyond the means of the country, thus making exploitation essential. To clear the conscience of the people, many political theorists like Machiavelli and Hobbs have provided the justification for nations to run amok. The country is powerful, and the people are powerful because they can satisfy their lust, greed, and can plunder at will; the laws of karma are either not known or considered not applicable and wished away.

With the rulers isolating themselves in a cocoon of comfort and luxury, the people are left to fend for themselves.

Thus everywhere around the world corruption is rife, although it may take different forms and expressions. Governments have lost their moral authority to rule. With the rulers isolating themselves in a cocoon of comfort and luxury, the people are left to fend for themselves. To protect their power, rulers resort to the politics of oppression, subterfuge, and misinformation.

What Is the General Reaction?

People like us, who are not directly affected, have become insensitive to these issues, and dismiss corruption as routine. A handful of people are trying to help, but the task is too daunting. For most of us, these issues do not matter. We rationalize that everyone has to meet his destiny. Besides, these things are symptoms of Kali-yuga; we need not bother. Label everything as illusion and forget about it. Just carry on with our own life; we have enough problems of our own.

But sometimes I ask myself, Do we really not have any responsibility in the face of the present calamities in the world? For those who are suffering, isn’t our callousness extremely painful? Can we not do something?

How Did Śrīla Prabhupāda And Other Ācāryas React In Similar Situations?

Prabhupāda wrote letters to Indian leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Indira Gandhi, and Lal Bahadur Shastri (whom he also met) to convince them to establish a Kṛṣṇa conscious society. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura invited the British governor of Bengal to Mayapur. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, while an officer in the British government during the nineteenth century, felt inspired to revive the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Even Lord Kṛṣṇa dealt with governance, and He tried to find a political solution to the conflict between the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas. He took part in the Kurukshetra war and spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā* to Arjuna, a *kṣatriya.*

Quoting from *Bhagavad-gītā,* Śrīla Prabhupāda describes how society should be governed by the *varṇāśrama* system of four *varṇas* (occupations) and four *āśramas* (spiritual orders). The four *varṇas* are to be based not on birth, but on qualification and activities. Prabhupāda said that a purpose of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is to establish the *varṇāśrama* system to help the populace slowly develop in devotional service to God. He also encouraged some of his disciples to run for political office. A few did, but lost.

Not long after U.S. President George Bush, Sr., spoke about a new world order in September 1990, editor-in-chief Jayādvaita Swami wrote a *Back to Godhead* editorial titled “Toward an Enlightened New World Order” (BTG May/June 1991): “The best model for a new world order has already been given to us by Lord Kṛṣṇa. We’d be inspired to see a real *kṣatriya* – a stronger, gentler *kṣatriya* – lead the world in putting that order into place.”

Kṣatriyas are not only heroic and tough; they’re also spiritually cultured and enlightened.

Earlier in the same editorial:

> What survival ultimately calls for, the *kṣatriya* knows, is not petroleum but food. And food for human beings comes most abundantly, by God’s mercy, from tilled land and the udder of the cow.
>
> Mr. Bush has spoken of “a new world order,” though he hasn’t made clear what it might be. We suggest it should have these features:
>
> 1. It should draw its prosperity from cultivating the earth and protecting the cow and the bull, not from ravaging the earth’s resources and slaughtering its creatures.
>
> 2. Its presidents, prime ministers, and kings should be men trained and strong in spiritual understanding and culture.
>
> 3. The advisors those leaders rely on should be self-realized

souls who see that a world in proper order is a world making progress back to Godhead – and who see how to help that progress come about.

The General Populace Is Misdirected

As the leaders of the world are busy filling their pockets, the general populace is mostly indifferent. The middle class, who now have more disposable incomes, are happy to buy better houses, cars, televisions, mobile phones, and other gadgets. Young men and women are happy working twelve to sixteen hours a day, gleefully tapping at their laptops and enjoying the newfound freedom from other commitments in their lives. With single-minded attention to money, they've given up higher values and morals for good.

What people don't understand is that no amount of material development can make the earth a better place for us to live. The wealth of one section of the people is possible only due to the poverty of another section. Today's problems are not limited to one country; the effects are felt worldwide. While it may be very patriotic to cheer the development of one's own country at the cost of others, such patriotism is greatly damaging in the overall perspective, and in the long run it is going to hit us back. History shows that all the great civilizations that were based on the exploitation of the conquered fell by the wayside. The imperialist nations of Europe are now limited to their own borders. The present superpowers grapple with new emerging economies, trying desperately to hold on to their power.

Kṛṣṇa Consciousness Is Not An Option, But a Necessity

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement founded by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda is now in its forty-eighth year. The Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is now well established with hundreds of centers all over the world and wide acceptability and respectability as a genuine spiritual organization. The movement has a wide base of people from all walks of life.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness can solve all the problems of this world, which is full of suffering. However, even though we have grown into a large spiritual organization, we still have not been able to change the life of people in general. Some people who have been exposed to our philosophy consider us good people, but too good to follow. We are considered an exclusive enclave, and most people look at us with amazement – and sometimes with amusement.

Our preaching has been successful amongst a large number of people, but we are still only a small fragment of the world population. Therefore we need to do more than just preach. We need to get into the government and stop this fast degeneration of society. Unless we act soon, it may be too late. With growing commercialization and the general populace shying away from God consciousness, the task is getting tougher day by day.

It may seem a preposterous idea, an impossible wish, or an unnecessary proposition, but it is at least worth a try. Without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, this planet will in the very near future become an unlivable world. We need to get to the root of the problem. Governments have the power to get to the root of almost any problem to solve it. The political platform is also a great opportunity for preaching. The Roman Empire propagated Christianity; the power of armies established Islam; Emperor Ashok popularized Buddhism.

How Kṛṣṇa Conscious Governance Can Change The Face of the Earth

I propose that Kṛṣṇa conscious governments take care of three basic issues:

1. Education: Education is the foundation of human society. Without spiritual and moral education, human beings behave like animals. *Brāhmaṇas* with high morals and integrity should be in charge of education. People should know that our scriptures are the storehouse of knowledge – in science, medicine, astronomy, engineering, social sciences, everything.

Simple living and high thinking should be the guiding principles of life. Issues concerning sense control, abortion, karma, and reincarnation should be taught, producing sin-free

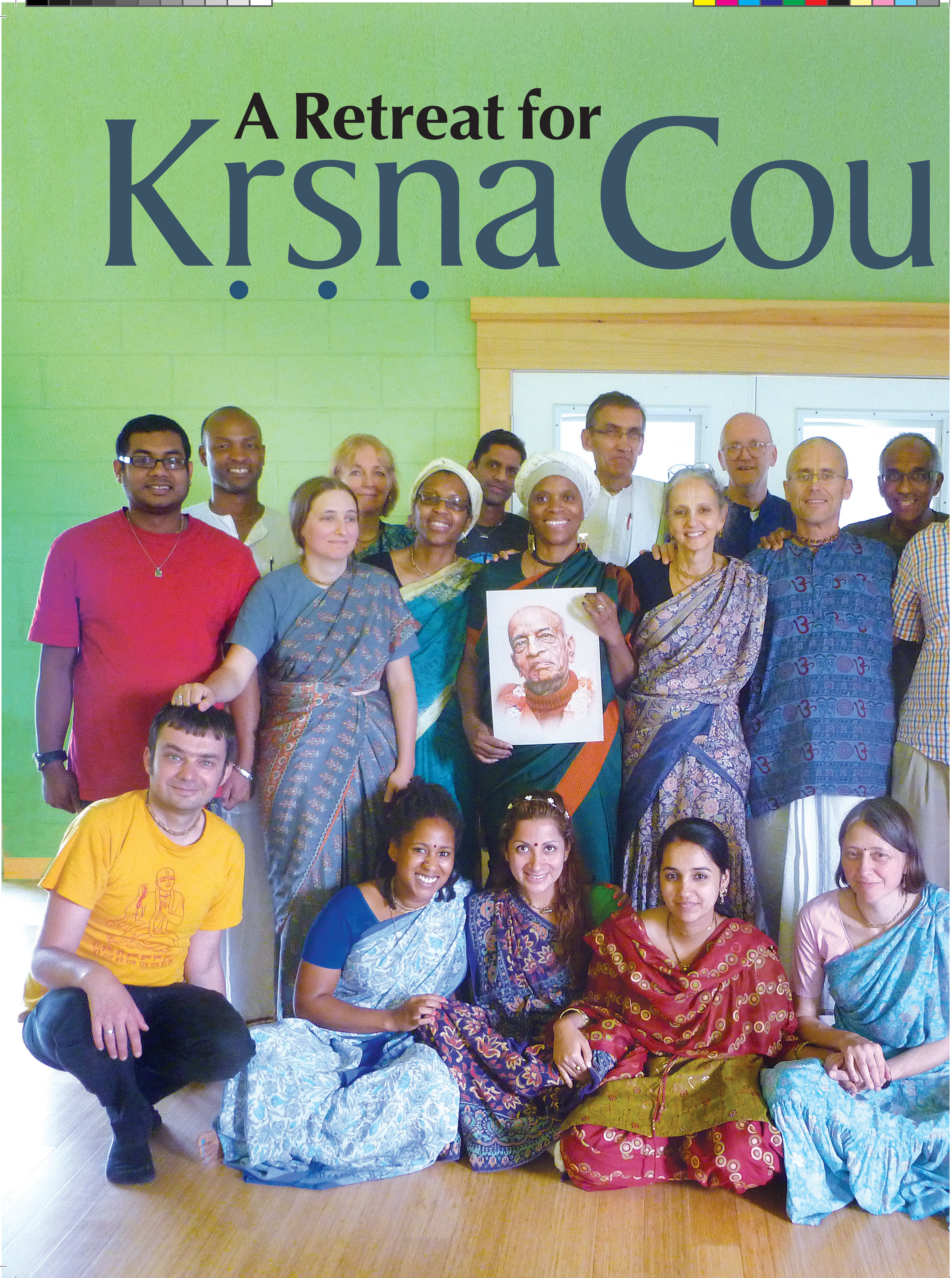
(*please turn to page 55*)

How to Put BTG in Your Will

After providing for their families and loved ones, subscribers may want to put *Back to Godhead* in their wills, thus helping to assure the long-term future of this work. In the USA, bequests are free of estate tax and can substantially reduce the amount of your assets claimed by the government.* You can give needed support for *Back to Godhead* by simply including the following words in your will: *I give, devise, and bequeath to* Back to Godhead, *18024 NW 112th Blvd., Alachua, FL 32615* (insert amount being given here) *to be used to support* Back to Godhead *and its related activities, including the Krishna.com website.* A bequest can be a specific dollar amount, a specific piece of property, a percentage of an estate, or all or part of the residue of an estate. You can also name BTG as a contingency beneficiary in the event someone named in your will is no longer living. It is recommended that a lawyer help in drafting or amending a will.

*If you live outside the USA, check the estate tax laws for your country.

A Retreat for Kṛṣṇa Cou



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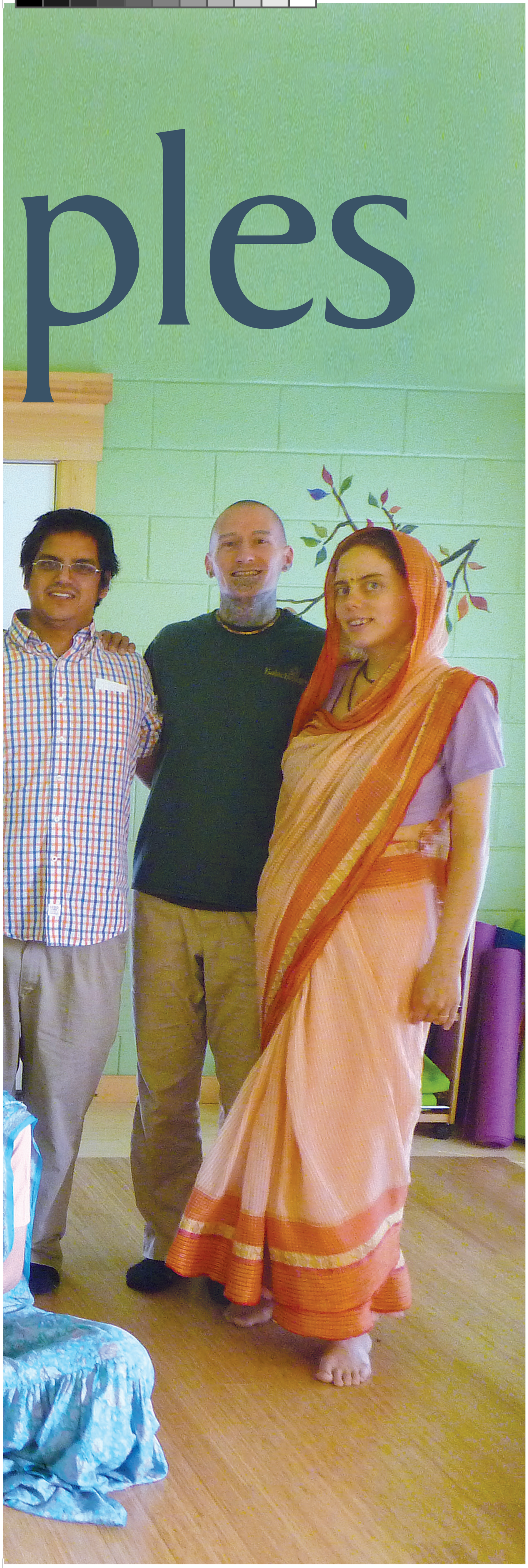


ISKCON's Grihastha Vision Team helps married couples progress in harmony toward their shared ultimate goal: pure love for Kṛṣṇa.

by Arcana Siddhī Devī Dāsī

MANY YEARS AGO, when I told my boyfriend I was moving into the ashram of a Hare Kṛṣṇa temple, he cried. He told me it would have been easier if I had killed myself, since at least people could understand and give him some sympathy and support. His statement stunned me. If he loved me, wouldn't he want the best for me? Wouldn't he at least want me to be happy? I concluded that love didn't exist in the material world and that I would remain a single woman, devoting the rest of my life to God.

Fast-forward thirty-seven years. My husband and I are standing in front of nine couples at Gita-nagari, ISKCON's 350-acre farm north of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. It is the first retreat for couples organized by ISKCON's Grihastha Vision Team. What happened to my resolve to remain unmarried? After becoming a more mature devotee, I could understand how a Kṛṣṇa conscious marriage could help me progress in my spiritual life. My initial repulsion morphed into attraction for a companion to share and support my spiritual journey. I also saw some good examples of Kṛṣṇa conscious couples serving together and raising Kṛṣṇa conscious children.

Healthy marriages are the foundation of our spiritual society, the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. Śrīla Prabhupāda compared the *gṛhastha āśrama* to the belly of the body. The stomach nourishes all the other parts of the body, and the *gṛhastha āśrama,* through acts of charity, supports the other *āśramas*: the *brahmacārīs, vānaprasthas,* and *sannyāsīs*. According to the *Āyurveda*, most diseases can be traced to poor digestion. To cure the body, the wise practitioner starts by addressing the problems in the stomach. Similarly, the body of a spiritual society flourishes when supported by healthy, strong marriages.

As members of the Grihastha Vision Team from its inception in 2002, my husband and I, along with the other team members, have put a lot of effort into understanding what makes a healthy Kṛṣṇa conscious marriage and discovering how to give young couples knowledge and tools to support their spiritual union. Our thirteen-member team of professional counselors and marriage educators have designed and taught courses

Attendees of the Gita-nagari couples' retreat. The author and her husband are in the center of the photo.

and workshops for married couples, betrothed couples, and single devotees thinking about getting married. We have written a book, soon to come out, entitled *Heart and Soul Connection: A Devotional Guide to Love, Marriage and Service.*

Every year at our annual meeting, the idea of having a couple's retreat has come up. Faced with the daunting task of looking for a retreat center, finding cooks, and organizing everything, we would inevitably table the retreat for another year. Finally, this past year, we heard about retreats being held at Gita-nagari. The facilities sounded ideal, and the resident devotees would provide *prasāda* and lodging. We just needed to coordinate and market the retreat, design the curriculum, and show up to serve the attendees.

Nine of our team members arrived in Gita-nagari. Our theme was "Connection: The Foundation for Love and Trust."

Learning to Listen

The first session on Saturday was "The Yoga of Listening." Communication is less about talking and more about being attentive and present for each other. We know from Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī that listening or hearing confidentially is one of the six kinds of loving exchanges between Vaiṣṇavas. We have a passion to be understood, but we may be less passionate to understand someone else's heart, especially if it differs from our own beliefs. The skill of understanding another's heart sometimes appears deceptively easy, yet to apply that skill consistently in a relationship is quite challenging.

For a couple to have a meaningful conversation, they must cherish each other enough to put aside their electronic devices and distracting multi-tasking activities and be present. I see a relationship between the yoga of listening and our connection with Kṛṣṇa during *japa* time: The practice of being present in our everyday exchanges helps us control the mind during *japa* and thus connect with Kṛṣṇa. And the more we connect with Kṛṣṇa, the source of all relationships, the easier it is to connect with other souls, who are all part of Him.

It is important to see how our family life and our relationships are intimately intertwined with our direct spiritual practices. Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and showing kindness to all living entities are two essential ingredients for advancing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Kindness begins at home with our loved ones. And being fully present when our spouse needs kindness is rudimentary to a successful relationship.

If we can't find society, friendship, and love among devotees, we will leave their company and search it out elsewhere.

Emotional Bank Accounts

Building on the foundational skill of listening, our next session was "Emotional Bank Accounts," a metaphor to conceptualize how our words and actions create consequences. We unconsciously open up an emotional bank account with everyone we meet. Some accounts are mostly inactive, but the accounts we have with our close family members are constantly active. Throughout the day we make deposits or withdrawals in our loved one's emotional accounts. Kṛṣṇa Dāsa makes a deposit when he calls his wife from work at lunchtime and tells her how much he appreciates her for all the things she does for him. Lalitā Dāsī makes a withdrawal when she speaks critically about her husband's mother.

Most of us check our monetary bank accounts at least once a month. We become concerned when our balance is approaching zero and will do whatever we can to decrease our withdrawals and increase our deposits. But we may not be so tuned in to the emotional balance in our spouse's account. We may not have any idea the account is overdrawn until we hear our spouse threatening us with divorce.

Śrīla Prabhupāda routinely pointed out the danger of attachment for "society, friendship, and love" based on the bodily concept of life. If we can't find society, friendship, and love among devotees, we will leave their company and search it out elsewhere. Each of us has our own way to express and feel love, so it is important for couples to understand each other in this regard. Expressions of love include gifts, hugs, acts of service, and quality time together. While we might like receiving all these forms of affection from our spouse, we generally have an affinity with one or two over the others. When we understand which are most important to our spouse, we can do more of things that are really important to them – increasing our balance in their emotional bank account, and their balance in ours.

Sometimes we erroneously assume that the things that make deposits into our emotional bank account are the same for our spouse. If we offer our spouse affection in a way that isn't how he or she primarily needs to receive it, the gesture might be appreciated, but it won't mean as much. For example, Devi primarily needs to receive words of affirmation and appreciation. She needs confirmation that her partner cares for her by hearing him frequently express to her his feelings. Her husband, on the other hand, primarily needs to feel affection through receiving acts of service, so he assumes his wife knows he loves her because he does so many things for her. He is surprised to hear his wife tell him she doesn't feel loved. Understanding each other's need for specific forms of affection helps them both. Devi is now able to look at his acts of service as his way of telling her he cares for her, and he is trying to express his feelings with words of affirmation more often.

Praying Together

We finished Saturday with a session on prayer. Some sophisticated research from the University of Georgia has validated the old aphorism that the family that prays together stays together. Chanting *japa* together can greatly nourish a couple's relationship, because together they are praying to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa to be given the privilege to serve Them. The Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra is a petitionary prayer. Another powerful form of prayer is intercessory prayer, or praying for others. Couples can pray for each other. During this session, the husband and wife interviewed each other about their heartfelt dreams and aspirations. Using this information, they each composed a prayer for the other. They also committed to come together every day to pray for each other.

Symbols of the Past, Present, and Future

On Saturday night, we gave the couples an assignment to walk through Gita-nagari's wilderness to find an object that represented their relationship in the past, one for their current relationship, and one for their hopes for their future relationship. Sunday morning was show and tell. Each couple brought their prized artifacts to the front of the room and talked about their experience on the walk and the meaning of each item they found. By this time the group of couples had developed trust in one another. Through their tears and laughter they shared their relationship journey.

Most of the couples had something beautiful to represent the past – that tantalizing first stage of a relationship called romantic love or infatuation when nature gives us a free ride, when loving feelings allow us to sacrifice effortlessly and we overlook or minimize the faults. The artifact that represented the present, especially for the younger couples, symbolized the struggle of the second stage of a relationship, where the faults become magnified and we struggle to find our identity in the relationship.

One couple brought some cow dung to epitomize the present. The loveliness of the metaphor became clear when they explained that cow dung, although excrement, has antiseptic properties and can be useful for heating, cooking, cleaning. They both saw how the current struggles in their marriage could help them grow as individuals and come closer to one another and Kṛṣṇa. Peacock feathers, blooming flowers, and a smooth rock were some of the artifacts couples found to represent their hopes for their future together.

Two Minds and Core Hurts

Our show-and-tell session was followed by "The marriage of two minds, and core hurts." Most of us are grateful we only have one mind to deal with. We are sometimes taken off guard in marriage when we realize we have another mind to reckon with in close proximity. Many verses in scripture address the importance of controlling the mind, which Arjuna tells Kṛṣṇa is more difficult to control than the wind. Kṛṣṇa replies that by suitable practice and detachment one can succeed in controlling the mind.

Practice and detachment are most prominent in the stage of devotional progress called *anartha-nivṛtti*, when we give up unwanted mental attitudes and habits that prevent us from progressing in our spiritual life. From my own experience and from counseling devotees, I'm convinced that understanding both our own psychology and that of others is very helpful in this stage of *bhakti.* We often don't recognize how our conditioning is keeping us chained to the bodily concept of life.

The term *core hurts* refers to perceived injuries to our sense of self. They include feeling disregarded, unimportant, accused, guilty, devalued, rejected, powerless, inadequate, and unlovable. For most of us, the knee-jerk response to these hurts is either fight or flight. We become angry and attack, or we shut down and stonewall our spouse. Many marital problems involve this dynamic.

We introduced a process that allows the core hurt to be a signal that we are in danger of sliding into a negative state of mind, generally consisting of blame, along with anger and resentment. The process involves recalling an image of something that will help ground us in our "core essence" (our material self in goodness), where we feel compassionate, caring, peaceful, faithful. From this place we can find a solution to the situation or conflict.

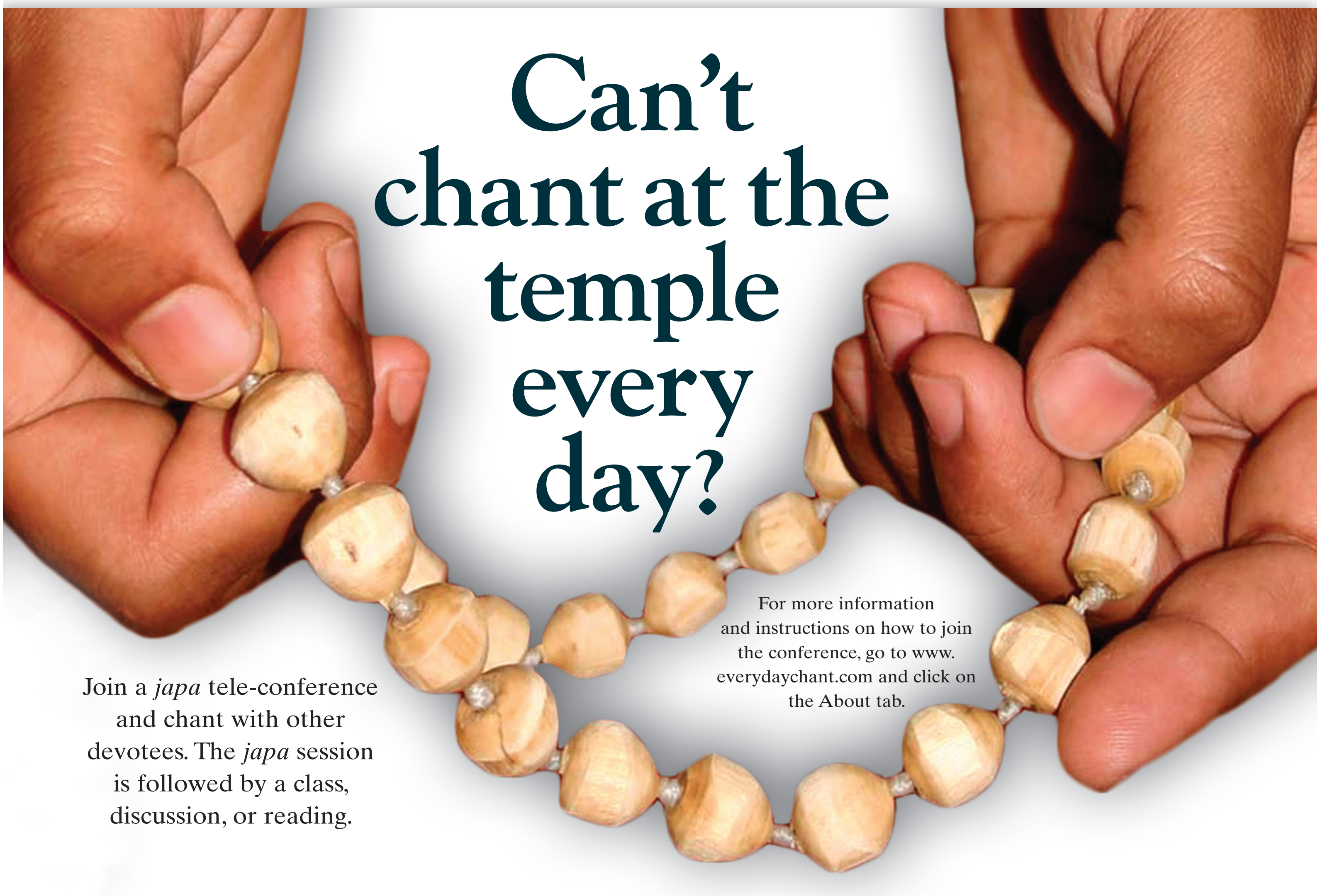
Woven into the retreat were activities to help us connect with one another, including honoring delicious *prasāda* together and visiting Gita-nagari's Rādhā-Dāmodara temple, the beautiful, spacious home of Kṛṣṇa as the playful Dāmodara, His golden consort Rādhārāṇī, and Their intimate friends and attendants Lalitā and Viśākhā.

In the final process of the retreat, we each wrote a loving letter to our spouse, which we put in a stamped, addressed envelope and mailed a month later. When I received my letter from my husband, I felt very connected to him, appreciating the time we had spent in Gita-nagari. To us, the success of our Kṛṣṇa conscious marriage is helping other devotee couples navigate their spiritual journey together.

The response we received from the participants was overwhelmingly positive. They all felt enlivened by the retreat and believed it would go a long way to help smooth out the rough edges in their marriage and meet marital challenges with new skills and tools. The couples implored us to organize another retreat soon. The Grihastha Vision Team is now planning our next retreat, to be held in Gita-nagari on September 12–14, 2014.

Check out our website (www.vaisnavafamilyresources.org) for upcoming events and for resources to support and nurture devotees living in the *gṛhastha āśrama.*

Arcana Siddhī Devī Dāsī was initiated by Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1976. She lives with her husband in Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, where she works as a psychotherapist.



For more information and instructions on how to join the conference, go to www.everydaychant.com and click on the About tab.

Join a *japa* tele-conference and chant with other devotees. The *japa* session is followed by a class, discussion, or reading.

CALENDAR

*This calendar is calculated for Mayapur, West Bengal, India. The dates, derived from a lunar calendar, may vary by one day for other locations. For the exact dates for your area, go to **www.krishnadays.com**.*

Because the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement comes in disciplic line from Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the calendar includes not only dates relevant to all followers of the Vedic tradition but also dates relating to Lord Caitanya's associates and prominent spiritual masters in His disciplic succession.

Month of Govinda

(*February 15 – March 16*)

MARCH

2 – Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī, the great devotee in the disciplic line from Lord Caitanya who confirmed Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's discovery of Lord Caitanya's birthplace.

12 – Amalakī-vrata Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

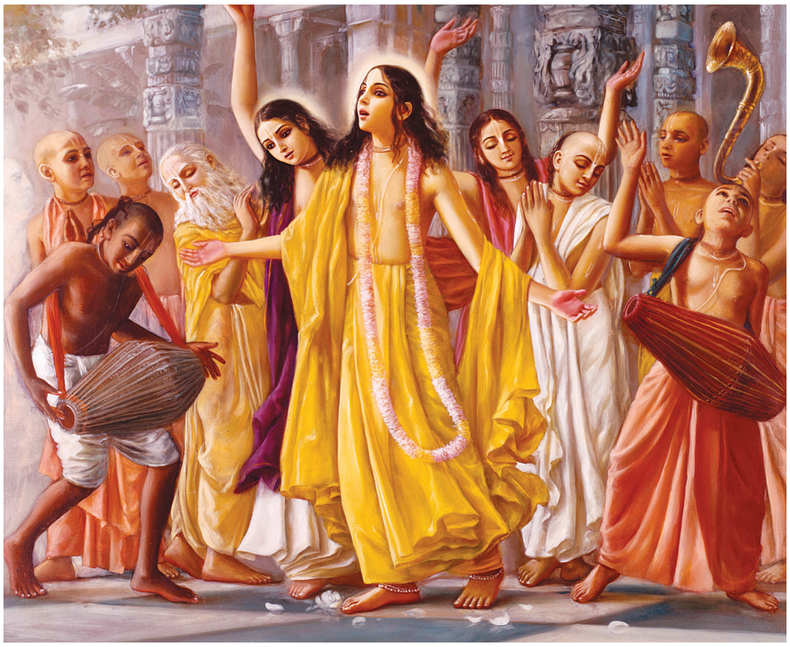
13 – Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī, the spiritual master of Lord Caitanya's spiritual master.

16 – Śrī Gaura Pūrṇimā, the appearance anniversary of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself in the role of His own devotee. Fasting till moonrise, followed by a break-fast of Ekādaśī *prasādam* (no grains or beans). Feasting tomorrow.

Month of Viṣṇu

(*March 17 – April 15*)

24 – Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, one of Lord Caitanya's principal associates.



Detail from a painting by Bharadrāja Dāsa

Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu

27 – Pāpamocanī Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

APRIL

4 – Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmānujācārya, a Vaiṣṇava philosopher and spiritual master who appeared in the eleventh century.

8 – Śrī Rāma Navamī, the appearance anniversary of Lord Rāmacandra. Fasting till sunset, followed by feasting.

11 – Kāmadā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

15 – Śrī Kṛṣṇa Vasanta Rāsa, Lord Kṛṣṇa's springtime *rāsa* dance. Balarāma Rāsa Yātrā, Lord Balarāma's *rāsa* dance. Appearance anniversary of Hanumānjī, eternal servant of Lord Rāma. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita, a follower of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

Month of Madhusūdana

(*April 16 – May 14*)

24 – Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura, the author of *Śrī Caitanya-Bhāgavata,* a biography on Lord Caitanya.

25 – Varūthinī Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

29 – Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Gadādhara Paṇḍita, one of Lord Caitanya's principal associates.

MAY

2 – Beginning of Candana Yātrā, the festival of anointing the temple deity with sandalwood pulp for twenty-one days.

8 – Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Sītā Devī, the consort of Lord Rāmacandra. Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Jāhnavā Devī, the consort of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Madhu Paṇḍita, a great devotee of Lord Caitanya.

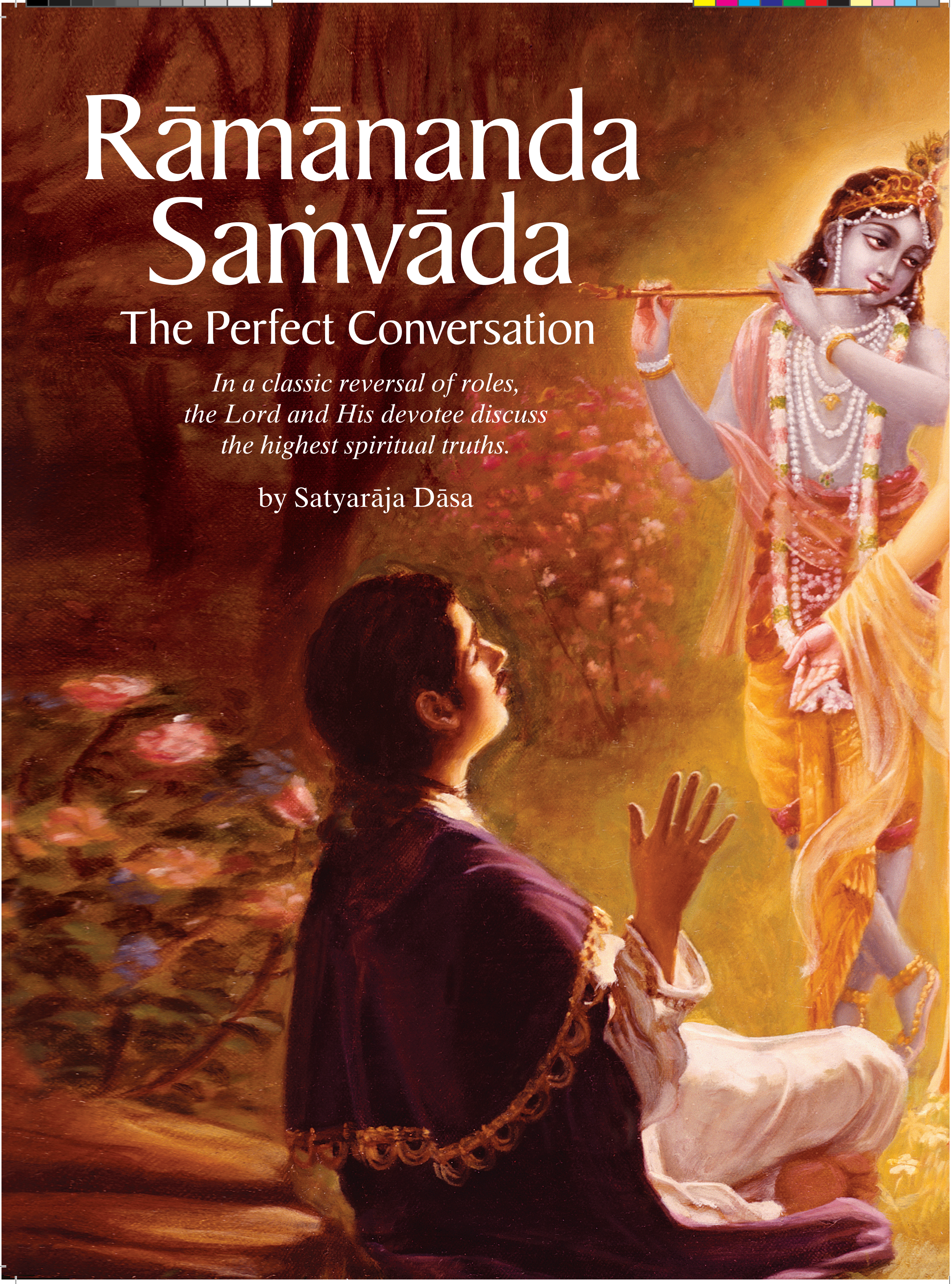
10 – Mohinī Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

Rāmānanda Saṁvāda

The Perfect Conversation

*In a classic reversal of roles,
the Lord and His devotee discuss
the highest spiritual truths.*

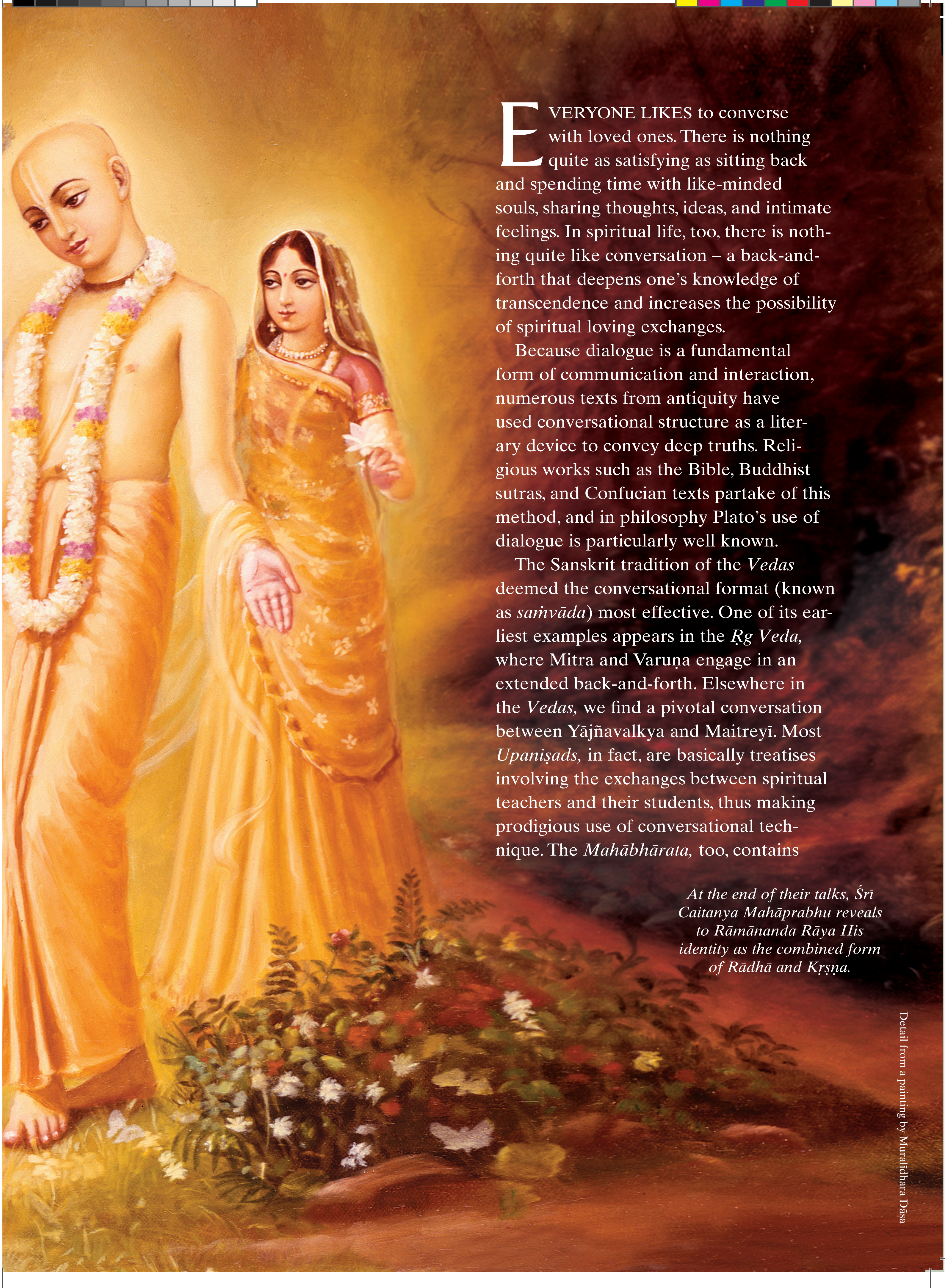
by Satyarāja Dāsa



EVERYONE LIKES to converse with loved ones. There is nothing quite as satisfying as sitting back and spending time with like-minded souls, sharing thoughts, ideas, and intimate feelings. In spiritual life, too, there is nothing quite like conversation – a back-and-forth that deepens one's knowledge of transcendence and increases the possibility of spiritual loving exchanges.

Because dialogue is a fundamental form of communication and interaction, numerous texts from antiquity have used conversational structure as a literary device to convey deep truths. Religious works such as the Bible, Buddhist sutras, and Confucian texts partake of this method, and in philosophy Plato's use of dialogue is particularly well known.

The Sanskrit tradition of the *Vedas* deemed the conversational format (known as *saṁvāda*) most effective. One of its earliest examples appears in the *Ṛg Veda,* where Mitra and Varuṇa engage in an extended back-and-forth. Elsewhere in the *Vedas,* we find a pivotal conversation between Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī. Most *Upaniṣads,* in fact, are basically treatises involving the exchanges between spiritual teachers and their students, thus making prodigious use of conversational technique. The *Mahābhārata,* too, contains



At the end of their talks, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu reveals to Rāmānanda Rāya His identity as the combined form of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Detail from a painting by Muralidhara Dāsa numerous examples: Draupadī and Satyabhāmā, Yakṣa and Yudhiṣṭhira, Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna (*Bhagavad-gītā*).

Rāmānanda Rāya, A Super-Excellent Vaiṣṇava

For Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, or devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa in His form as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the best *saṁvāda* is a conversation between Caitanya and Rāmānanda Rāya, recorded in the seventeenth-century text *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya,* Chapter 8). Their conversation in Vidyanagar on the bank of the Godavari River (east coast of south-central India) details the highest and most confidential aspects of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava philosophy.

When Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared as Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Kṛṣṇa's eternal associates accompanied Him. Born in Odisha, Rāmānanda was the eldest of five sons of Bhavānanda Rāya. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya,* 10.53), Lord Caitanya tells Bhavānanda Rāya: "You are Pāṇḍu, and your wife is Kuntī. Your five sons are the five Pāṇḍavas."*

Bhavānanda's home was in Alalanath, also known as Brahmagiri, about twelve miles west of Jagannath Puri. The family was well-to-do and devout.

Rāmānanda is traditionally regarded as a disciple of Rāghavendra Purī and a grand-disciple of Mādhavendra Purī, an important predecessor of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Rāmānanda was a natural Vaiṣṇava in heart and soul.

The ensuing conversation might very well be the deepest theological discussion ever noted down for posterity.

As Rāmānanda reached adulthood, he served as the governor of a district known Vidyanagar (around modern-day Rajahmundry) in South India, then part of the Odisha kingdom of Prataparudra Deva, who acceded to the throne in 1497, after his father, Purushottam Deva. Prataparudra's empire spread from the banks of the Ganges to the southern borders of Karnataka, with his capital in Cuttack. Later, Rāmānanda served as one of his prominent ministers.

Rāmānanda Rāya's significance in the pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu begins soon after the Lord accepted the *sannyāsa* order of life. It was then that Mahāprabhu arrived in Puri and met Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, the king's court pandit. Sārvabhauma was a prominent Māyāvādī (impersonalist) philosopher who was soon swayed by Mahāprabhu's charisma and teaching.

The Lord didn't stay in Puri for long. He left for a tour of South India, to spread the holy name of Kṛṣṇa to all. But just prior to His departure, Sārvabhauma gave Him paraphernalia for His journey and requested Him to visit Rāmānanda Rāya at Vidyanagar. "Here, you will find a singularly super-excellent Vaiṣṇava," Sārvabhauma said.

After several adventures on His way south, Mahāprabhu finally arrived at the Godavari, making a beeline for Rajahmundry, the largest city on the river's banks. It is directly across from an area called Kovvur, where Śrī Rāmānanda often bathed. After enjoying the waters there Himself, at Gospada Ghat, Mahāprabhu sat and waited.

When Rāmānanda passed by with his stately retinue, on seeing Mahāprabhu's effulgent form he descended from his palanquin and offered obeisance, enthralled by the Lord's magnificence. They greeted each other and embraced. Both felt the onset of divine emotions, experiencing the highest forms of transcendental love in each other's company.

The Sacred Conversation

Mahāprabhu expressed a desire to hear about Kṛṣṇa from Śrī Rāmānanda's pure lips, and so they agreed to spend time together. Normally, the devotee hears from the Lord, and not the other way around. But here, for the Lord's pleasure, the situation was reversed. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī relates in his *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 8.1): "Gaurāṅga [Caitanya] is like the ocean of spiritual truths; He filled the cloud named Rāmānanda with the nectar of devotion to Himself. Rāmānanda then rained down that same nectar on the very ocean from which it had come, producing the jewels of transcendental knowledge." In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Arjuna hears from Lord Kṛṣṇa, but here Kṛṣṇa (Śrī Caitanya) hears from His devotee Arjuna (Rāmānanda Rāya).

Mahāprabhu asked Rāmānanda Rāya to explain the ultimate goal of life, using evidence from the scriptures. This he did, and the ensuing conversation might very well be the deepest theological discussion ever noted down for posterity.

Although Rāmānanda first proposed (as the ultimate goal) observance of the four social and four spiritual orders of life (*varṇāśrama*) and executing one's duties in accordance with this principle, Mahāprabhu quickly rejected this proposal as superficial. Acknowledging this, Śrī Rāmānanda gradually proposed other options, one after another, so that by the end of the conversation the reader sees the full gamut of Vedic knowledge and the numerous goals leading to the ultimate spiritual conclusion. The dialogue takes them from the idea

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*According to the Gauḍīya tradition, Rāmānanda Rāya is an incarnation of Arjuna. He is also an incarnation of the *gopī* Viśākhā, one of Rādhārāṇī's closest companions, as well as the *gopī* Arjunīyā.

of merely renouncing the fruits of one’s activities to rendering formal service to the Lord; from serving the Lord with devotion mixed with mundane action (*karma-miśra-bhakti*) to devotion mixed with knowledge (*jñāna-miśra-bhakti*) to pure devotional service without any motivation or mundane desire (*prema-bhakti*).

Although, as a matter of course, Mahāprabhu agreed that pure devotional service (*bhakti-yoga*) constitutes entrance into the ultimate goal of life, He urged Rāmānanda to go further, for there are subtle nuances regarding this supreme truth. In response, Rāmānanda explained the basic elements of *rasa-tattva,* or loving attachment to Kṛṣṇa in servitorship, friendship, parenthood, and romantic love. Even hearing this, however, Mahāprabhu wanted more: “Kindly proceed further and tell Me where it goes from there.”

Śrī Rāmānanda then explained the love of the *gopīs*, Kṛṣṇa’s cowherd girlfriends, adding that the selfless mood of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, the topmost *gopī*, remains superexcellent and unsurpassable. Living beings must aspire to serve Her and to reach for Her level of loving devotion, knowing they can attain only a facsimile of Her love. That aspiration is the ultimate goal of life.

Mahāprabhu was pleased, accepting this conclusion about life’s consummate stage of perfection. But He still wanted to hear more, and so Rāmānanda obliged Him by singing a song he had composed that sums up Śrī Rādhā’s confidential mood of divine love (*prema-vivarta-vilāsa*). At one point, Śrī Caitanya covered Rāmānanda’s mouth with His hand, confirming that Rāmānanda was now expressing the most intimate and confidential spiritual truths, the realization of which can come only through devotional practice. After this, Śrī Rāmānanda elaborated a bit more on the intimate love of Śrī Rādhā and Her *gopī* attendants.

Finally, Śrī Caitanya and Rāmānanda embraced, weeping in spiritual ecstasy. They concluded their talk and rested for the night.

Essential Questions

The next evening, Rāmānanda met Mahāprabhu again. The Lord embraced him with great love and, after comfortably seating him, began to ask questions.

Mahāprabhu: “What is the best education?”

Śrī Rāmānanda: “Devotion to Kṛṣṇa.”

Mahāprabhu: “What is the greatest activity for a living entity?”

Śrī Rāmānanda: “To be the servant of Kṛṣṇa.”

Mahāprabhu: “What is the supreme wealth?”

Śrī Rāmānanda: “Love of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.”

Mahāprabhu: “What is the greatest unhappiness?”

Śrī Rāmānanda: “To not have the association of Kṛṣṇa’s devotees.”

Mahāprabhu: “What is the highest liberation?”

Śrī Rāmānanda: “Love for Kṛṣṇa.”

Mahāprabhu: “What is the best song?”

Śrī Rāmānanda: “A song describing the pastimes of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.”

Mahāprabhu: “What is most auspicious for living entities?”

Śrī Rāmānanda: “The association of a devotee of Kṛṣṇa.”

Mahāprabhu: “What is the only thing we have to remember?”

Śrī Rāmānanda: “Kṛṣṇa’s name, qualities, and pastimes.”

Mahāprabhu: “What is the only thing to meditate upon?”

Śrī Rāmānanda: “The lotus feet of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.”

Mahāprabhu: “Where is the best place to live?”

Śrī Rāmānanda: “Wherever Kṛṣṇa

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displays His transcendental pastimes."

Mahāprabhu: "What is the best thing to be heard?"

Śrī Rāmānanda: "Descriptions of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's loving pastimes."

Mahāprabhu: "What is the only thing to be glorified?"

Śrī Rāmānanda: "The name of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa."

In this way, Mahāprabhu would ask questions and Śrī Rāmānanda would answer, sometimes in terse, one-sentence responses, sometimes in a detailed way. Over the centuries, the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* have elaborated Rāmānanda's teachings to make explicit what is mostly implicit in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Their books constitute a storehouse of literature on love of God.

The conversation evokes a simpler way of life that stresses the importance of taking one's time and evolving spiritually.

Mahāprabhu as God

When their talks were nearly complete, Mahāprabhu revealed His divine nature as Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, both mystically appearing in the person of Śrī Caitanya. Seeing this form, Rāmānanda could not contain himself and fell unconscious. Regaining his senses after some time, he offered spontaneous hymns in praise of the Lord. Mahāprabhu then requested him to keep confidential the truths of His mysterious identity and appearance. He asked Rāmānanda to transfer to Jagannath Puri, saying that the two of them could remain there together and happily pass their time discussing Kṛṣṇa. Without delay, Rāmānanda made Puri his headquarters, continuing to serve under King Prataparudra. He became close friends with Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī, Mahāprabhu's private secretary, and spent his time composing plays for the pleasure of Lord Jagannātha.

The Ideal Guru-Disciple Exchange

There is much to be gleaned from Rāmānanda Saṁvāda, as this conversation is now known, not least the essential exchange between an ideal guru and his disciple. As Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in his book *In Search of the Ultimate Goal of Life*:

> The method of approach and the manner of humility exhibited by Lord Caitanya to Rāmānanda is the ideal for approaching a bona fide *tattva-darśī*, or a master of transcendental knowledge. . . . In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, it is recommended that one approach the spiritual master for supramundane knowledge under the protection of service and surrender accompanied by relevant inquiries. Lord Caitanya, as the ideal teacher and practical demonstrator of the teachings of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, teaches us by His approach to Rāmānanda Rāya. He shows that a person desirous of knowing the transcendental science must not be proud of his material acquisitions of education and wealth, which are very insignificant to the transcendentally situated spiritual master from whom we should be very keen to understand the science of devotion.
>
> If somebody approaches the bona fide spiritual master with the vanity of mundane pride in respect to his heredity, wealth, education, or personal beauty and without the necessary qualifications of surrender, service, and relevant inquiry, surely such a person will be honored outwardly by the spiritual master, but the spiritual master will decline to bestow transcendental knowledge upon the student who by his attitude of mundane vanity is rendered unqualified. Such a proud student is actually a *śūdra* and he has no access to spiritual knowledge for want of the necessary qualifications mentioned above. Thus the *śūdra* student, instead of availing himself to the mercy of the spiritual master, goes to hell as a result of his mundane vanity.
>
> Rāmānanda Rāya was born in the family of a *śūdra* and was also a *gṛhastha* in terms of the system of *varṇāśrama-dharma.* Lord Caitanya appeared in the family of a highly cultured *brāhmaṇa* of Navadvipa and was in the topmost rank of the *sannyāsa āśrama.* Therefore, in terms of the *varṇāśrama* system, Rāmānanda Rāya was in the lowest status while Lord Caitanya was in the highest status; yet, because Rāmānanda was a master in the art of transcendental knowledge, Lord Caitanya approached him as one should approach a guru. He did so for the benefit of us all.

Today, the art of conversation is not what it used to be. People focus on their computers and cell phones more than on real interpersonal exchange. Technology distracts them from in-depth involvement with others, leading to crude forms of shorthand and impersonal kinds of communication: Many are more inclined to watching a conversation than engaging in one. Spiritual dialogue, too, is having a difficult time of it. The conversation between Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Rāmānanda Rāya brings us back to a time when interpersonal exchange was more prominent, evoking a simpler way of life that stresses the importance of taking one's time and evolving spiritually.

Of course, no conversation can match the interaction between Mahāprabhu and Rāmānanda Rāya. And reading their conversation makes you part of it, allowing you to enter a dialogue with the Lord.

Satyarāja Dāsa, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, is a BTG associate editor and founding editor of the Journal of Vaishnava Studies. *He has written more than thirty books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness and lives near New York City.*

BOOK SECTION: ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Referred to as "the ripe fruit of the tree of Vedic literature," *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the most complete and authoritative exposition of Vedic knowledge. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāṇa,* or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. Here we present *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in serialized form, with the original Sanskrit text, transliteration, word meanings, translation, and purports by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

KING AṄGA'S NEED FOR A SON

When King Aṅga asks the priests why the demigods have failed to appear to receive their shares of his sacrifice, the priests advise him of his only shortcoming.

CANTO 4: CHAPTER 13

26 तमूचुर्विस्मितास्तत्र यजमानमथर्त्विजः
हवींषि हूयमानानि न ते गृह्णन्ति देवताः

tam ūcur vismitās tatra
yajamānam athartvijaḥ
havīṁṣi hūyamānāni
na te gṛhṇanti devatāḥ

tam – unto King Aṅga; *ūcuḥ* – said; *vismitāḥ* – in wonder; *tatra* – there; *yajamānam* – to the institutor of the sacrifice; *atha* – then; *ṛtvijaḥ* – the priests; *havīṁṣi* – offerings of clarified butter; *hūyamānāni* – being offered; *na* – not; *te* – they; *gṛhṇanti* – accept; *devatāḥ* – the demigods.

The priests engaged in the sacrifice then informed King Aṅga: O King, we are properly offering the clarified butter in the sacrifice, but despite all our efforts the demigods do not accept it.

27 राजन् हवींष्यदुष्टानि श्रद्धयासादितानि ते
छन्दांस्ययातयामानि योजितानि धृतव्रतैः

rājan havīṁṣy aduṣṭāni
śraddhayāsāditāni te
chandāṁsy ayāta-yāmāni
yojitāni dhṛta-vrataiḥ

rājan – O King; *havīṁṣi* – sacrificial offerings; *aduṣṭāni* – not polluted; *śraddhayā* – with great faith and care; *āsāditāni* – collected; *te* – your; *chandāṁsi* – the mantras; *ayāta-yāmāni* – not deficient; *yojitāni* – properly executed; *dhṛta-vrataiḥ* – by qualified *brāhmaṇas.*

O King, we know that the paraphernalia to perform the sacrifice is well collected by you with great faith and care and is not polluted. Our chanting of the Vedic hymns is also not deficient in any way, for all the brāhmaṇas and priests present here are expert and are executing the performances properly.

PURPORT: It is the practice of the *brāhmaṇas* conversant with the science to pronounce a Vedic mantra in the right accent. The combination of the mantra and Sanskrit words must be chanted with the right pronunciation, otherwise it will not be successful. In this age the *brāhmaṇas* are neither well versed in the Sanskrit language nor very pure in practical life. But by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra one can attain the highest benefit of sacrificial performances. ① Even if the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra is not

1) In regard to pronunciation, what is the benefit of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra?

chanted properly, it still has so much potency that the chanter gains the effect.

28 न विदामेह देवानां हेलनं वयमण्वपि
यन्न गृह्णन्ति भागान् स्वान् ये देवाः कर्मसाक्षिणः

na vidāmeha devānāṁ
helanaṁ vayam aṇv api
yan na gṛhṇanti bhāgān svān
ye devāḥ karma-sākṣiṇaḥ

na – not; *vidāma* – can find; *iha* – in this connection; *devānām* – of the demigods; *helanam* – insult, neglect; *vayam* – we; *aṇu* – minute; *api* – even; *yat* – because of which; *na* – not; *gṛhṇanti* – accept; *bhāgān* – shares; *svān* – own; *ye* – who; *devāḥ* – the demigods; *karma-sākṣiṇaḥ* – witnesses for the sacrifice.

Dear King, we do not find any reason that the demigods should feel insulted or neglected in any way, but still the demigods who are witnesses for the sacrifice do not accept their shares. We do not know why this is so.

PURPORT: It is indicated herein that if there is negligence on the part of the priest, the demigods do not accept their share in sacrifices. Similarly, in devotional service there are offenses known as *sevā-aparādha.* Those who are engaged in worshiping the Deity, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, in the temple should avoid such offenses in service. The offenses in service are described in *The Nectar of Devotion.* If we simply make a show of offering services to the Deity but do not care for the *sevā-aparādha,* certainly the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Deity will not accept offerings from such nondevotees. ② Devotees engaged in temple worship should not, therefore, manufacture their own methods, but should strictly follow the regulative principles of cleanliness, and then offerings will be accepted.

मैत्रेय उवाच
29 अङ्गो द्विजवचः श्रुत्वा यजमानः सुदुर्मनाः
तत्प्रष्टुं व्यसृजद्वाचं सदस्यांस्तदनुज्ञया

maitreya uvāca
aṅgo dvija-vacaḥ śrutvā
yajamānaḥ sudurmanāḥ
tat praṣṭuṁ vyasṛjad vācaṁ
sadasyāṁs tad-anujñayā

maitreyaḥ uvāca – the great sage Maitreya answered; *aṅgaḥ* – King Aṅga; *dvija-vacaḥ* – the *brāhmaṇas'* words; *śrutvā* – after hearing; *yajamānaḥ* – the performer of the sacrifice; *sudurmanāḥ* – very much aggrieved in mind; *tat* – about that; *praṣṭum* – in order to inquire; *vyasṛjat vācam* – he spoke; *sadasyān* – to the priests; *tat* – their; *anujñayā* – taking permission.

2) Why must devotees engaged in temple worship avoid manufacturing their own methods?

Maitreya explained that King Aṅga, after hearing the statements of the priests, was greatly aggrieved. At that time he took permission from the priests to break his silence and inquired from all the priests who were present in the sacrificial arena.

30 नागच्छन्त्याहुता देवा न गृह्णन्ति ग्रहानिह
सदसस्पतयो ब्रूत किमवद्यं मया कृतम्

nāgacchanty āhutā devā
na gṛhṇanti grahān iha
sadasas-patayo brūta
kim avadyaṁ mayā kṛtam

na – not; *āgacchanti* – are coming; *āhutāḥ* – being invited; *devāḥ* – the demigods; *na* – not; *gṛhṇanti* – are accepting; *grahān* – shares; *iha* – in the sacrifice; *sadasaḥ-patayaḥ* – my dear priests; *brūta* – kindly tell me; *kim* – what; *avadyam* – offense; *mayā* – by me; *kṛtam* – was committed.

King Aṅga addressed the priestly order: My dear priests, kindly tell me what offense I have committed. Although invited, the demigods are neither taking part in the sacrifice nor accepting their shares.

सदसस्पतय ऊचुः
31 नरदेवेह भवतो नाघं तावन्मनाक् स्थितम्
अस्त्येकं प्राक्तनमघं यदिहेदृक् त्वमप्रजः

sadasas-pataya ūcuḥ
nara-deveha bhavato
nāghaṁ tāvan manāk sthitam
asty ekaṁ prāktanam aghaṁ
yad ihedṛk tvam aprajaḥ

sadasaḥ-patayaḥ ūcuḥ – the head priests said; *nara-deva* – O King; *iha* – in this life; *bhavataḥ* – of you; *na* – not; *agham* – sinful activity; *tāvat manāk* – even very slight; *sthitam* – situated; *asti*—there is; *ekam* – one; *prāktanam* – in the previous birth; *agham* – sinful activity; *yat* – by which; *iha* – in this life; *īdṛk* – like this; *tvam* – you; *aprajaḥ* – without any son.

The head priests said: O King, in this life we do not find any sinful activity, even within your mind, so you are not in the least offensive. But we can see that in your previous life you performed sinful activities due to which, in spite of your having all qualifications, you have no son.

PURPORT: ③ The purpose of marrying is to beget a son, because a son is necessary to deliver his father and forefathers from any hellish conditional life in which they may be. Cāṇakya Paṇḍita therefore says, *putra-hīnaṁ gṛhaṁ śūnyam:* without a son, married life is simply abominable. King Aṅga was a very pious king in this life, but because of his previous sinful activity he could not get a son. It is concluded, therefore, that if a person does not get a son it is due to his past sinful life.

32 तथा साधय भद्रं ते आत्मानं सुप्रजं नृप
इष्टस्ते पुत्रकामस्य पुत्रं दास्यति यज्ञभुक्

tathā sādhaya bhadraṁ te
ātmānaṁ suprajaṁ nṛpa
iṣṭas te putra-kāmasya
putraṁ dāsyati yajña-bhuk

tathā – therefore; *sādhaya* – execute the sacrifice to get; *bhadram* – good fortune; *te* – to you; *ātmānam* – your own; *su-prajam* – good son; *nṛpa* – O King; *iṣṭaḥ* – being worshiped; *te* – by you; *putra-kāmasya* – desiring to have a son; *putram* – a son; *dāsyati* – He will deliver; *yajña-bhuk* – the Lord, the enjoyer of the sacrifice.

O King, we wish all good fortune for you. You have no son, but if you pray at once to the Supreme Lord and ask for a son, and if you execute the sacrifice for that purpose, the enjoyer of the sacrifice, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, will fulfill your desire.

33 तथा स्वभागधेयानि ग्रहीष्यन्ति दिवौकसः
यद्यज्ञपुरुषः साक्षादपत्याय हरिर्वृतः

tathā sva-bhāgadheyāni
grahīṣyanti divaukasaḥ
yad yajña-puruṣaḥ sākṣād
apatyāya harir vṛtaḥ

tathā – thereupon; *sva-bhāga-dheyāni* – their shares in the sacrifice; *grahīṣyanti* – will accept; *diva-okasaḥ* – all the demigods; *yat* – because; *yajña-puruṣaḥ* – the enjoyer of all sacrifices; *sākṣāt* – directly; *apatyāya* – for the purpose of a son; *hariḥ* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *vṛtaḥ* – is invited.

When Hari, the supreme enjoyer of all sacrifices, is invited to fulfill your desire for a son, all the demigods will come with Him and take their shares in the sacrifice.

PURPORT: Whenever a sacrifice is performed, it is meant for satisfying Lord Viṣṇu, the enjoyer of the fruits of all sacrifices; and when Lord Viṣṇu agrees to come to a sacrificial arena, all the demigods naturally follow their master, and their shares are offered in such sacrifices. ④ The conclusion is that the sacrifices performed are meant for Lord Viṣṇu, not for the demigods.

34 तांस्तान् कामान् हरिर्दद्याद्यान् यान् कामयते जनः
आराधितो यथैवैष तथा पुंसां फलोदयः

tāṁs tān kāmān harir dadyād
yān yān kāmayate janaḥ
ārādhito yathaivaiṣa
tathā puṁsāṁ phalodayaḥ

tān tān – those; *kāmān* – desired objects; *hariḥ* – the Lord; *dadyāt* – will award; *yān yān* – whatsoever; *kāmayate* – desires; *janaḥ* – the person; *ārādhitaḥ* – being worshiped; *yathā* – as; *eva* – certainly; *eṣaḥ* – the Lord; *tathā* – similarly; *puṁsām* – of men; *phala-udayaḥ* – the result.

The performer of the sacrifices [under karma-kāṇḍa activities] achieves the fulfillment of the desire for which he worships the Lord.

PURPORT: In the *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord says that He awards benedictions to the worshiper according to his desire. The Supreme Personality of Godhead gives all living entities conditioned within this material world full freedom to act in their own way. But to His devotee He says that instead of working in that way, it is better to surrender unto Him, for He will take charge of the devotee. That is the difference between a devotee and a fruitive actor. The fruitive actor enjoys only the fruits of his own activities, but a devotee, being under the guidance of the Supreme Lord, simply advances in devotional service to achieve the ultimate goal of life—to go back home, back to Godhead. The significant word in this verse is *kāmān,* which means "sense gratificatory desires." A devotee is devoid of all *kāmān.* He is *anyābhilāṣitā-śūnya:* a devotee is always devoid of all desires for sense gratification. ⑤ His only aim is to satisfy or gratify the senses of the Lord. That is the difference between a *karmī* and a devotee.

35 इति व्यवसिता विप्रास्तस्य राज्ञः प्रजातये
पुरोडाशं निरवपन् शिपिविष्टाय विष्णवे

iti vyavasitā viprās
tasya rājñaḥ prajātaye
puroḍāśaṁ niravapan
śipi-viṣṭāya viṣṇave

3) Traditionally, why was it important for a married couple to beget a son?
4) For whom are all sacrifices meant?
5) What is the difference between a *karmī* and a devotee?

iti – thus; *vyavasitāḥ* – having decided; *viprāḥ* – the *brāhmaṇas; tasya* – his; *rājñaḥ* – of the king; *prajātaye* – for the purpose of getting a son; *puroḍāśam* – the paraphernalia of sacrifice; *niravapan* – offered; *śipi-viṣṭāya* – to the Lord, who is situated in the sacrificial fire; *viṣṇave* – to Lord Viṣṇu.

Thus for the sake of a son for King Aṅga, they decided to offer oblations to Lord Viṣṇu, who is situated in the hearts of all living entities.

PURPORT: ⑥ According to sacrificial rituals, animals are sometimes sacrificed in the *yajña* arena. Such animals are sacrificed not to kill them but to give them new life. Such action was an experiment to observe whether the Vedic mantras were being properly pronounced. Sometimes small animals are killed in a medical laboratory to investigate therapeutic effects. In a medical clinic, the animals are not revived, but in the *yajña* arena, when animals were sacrificed, they were again given life by the potency of Vedic mantras. ⑦ The word *śipi-viṣṭāya* appears in this verse. *Śipi* means “the flames of the sacrifice.” In the sacrificial fire if the oblations are offered into the flames, then Lord Viṣṇu is situated there in the form of the flames. Therefore Lord Viṣṇu is known as Śipiviṣṭa.

36 तस्मात्पुरुष उत्तस्थौ हेममाल्यमलाम्बरः
हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सिद्धमादाय पायसम्

tasmāt puruṣa uttasthau
hema-māly amalāmbaraḥ
hiraṇmayena pātreṇa
siddham ādāya pāyasam

tasmāt – from that fire; *puruṣaḥ* – a person; *uttasthau* – appeared; *hema-mālī* – with a golden garland; *amala-ambaraḥ* – in white garments; *hiraṇmayena* – golden; *pātreṇa* – with a pot; *siddham* – cooked; *ādāya* – carrying; *pāyasam* – rice boiled in milk.

As soon as the oblation was offered in the fire, a person appeared from the fire altar wearing a golden garland and a white dress. He was carrying a golden pot filled with rice boiled in milk.

37 स विप्रानुमतो राजा गृहीत्वाञ्जलिनौदनम्
अवघ्राय मुदा युक्तः प्रादात्पत्न्या उदारधीः

sa viprānumato rājā
gṛhītvāñjalinaudanam
avaghrāya mudā yuktaḥ
prādāt patnyā udāra-dhīḥ

saḥ – he; *vipra* – of the *brāhmaṇas; anumataḥ* – taking permission; *rājā* – the King; *gṛhītvā* – taking; *añjalinā* – in his joined palms; *odanam* – rice boiled in milk; *avaghrāya* – after smelling; *mudā* – with great delight; *yuktaḥ* – fixed; *prādāt* – offered; *patnyai* – to his wife; *udāra-dhīḥ* – liberal-minded.

The King was very liberal, and after taking permission from the priests, he took the preparation in his joined palms, and after smelling it he offered a portion to his wife.

6) Why were animals sometimes sacrificed in the *yajña* arena?
7) Why is Lord Viṣṇu known as Śipiviṣṭa?
8) How does Kṛṣṇa fulfill the desires of the *karmī* and the devotee differently?

PURPORT: The word *udāra-dhīḥ* is significant in this connection. The wife of the King, Sunīthā, was not fit to accept this benediction, yet the King was so liberal that without hesitation he offered to his wife the boiled rice in milk *prasāda* received from the *yajña-puruṣa.* Of course, everything is designed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As will be explained in later verses, this incident was not very favorable for the King. Since the King was very liberal, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in order to increase his detachment from this material world, willed that a cruel son be born of the Queen so that the King would have to leave home. As stated above, ⑧ Lord Viṣṇu fulfills the desires of the *karmīs* as they desire, but the Lord fulfills the desire of a devotee in a different way so that the devotee may gradually come to Him. This is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (*dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ yena mām upayānti te*). The Lord gives the devotee the opportunity to make progress further and further so that he may come back home, back to Godhead.

38 सा तत्पुंसवनं राज्ञी प्राश्य वै पत्युरादधे
गर्भं काल उपावृत्ते कुमारं सुषुवेऽप्रजा

sā tat puṁ-savanaṁ rājñī
prāśya vai patyur ādadhe
garbhaṁ kāla upāvṛtte
kumāraṁ suṣuve ’prajā

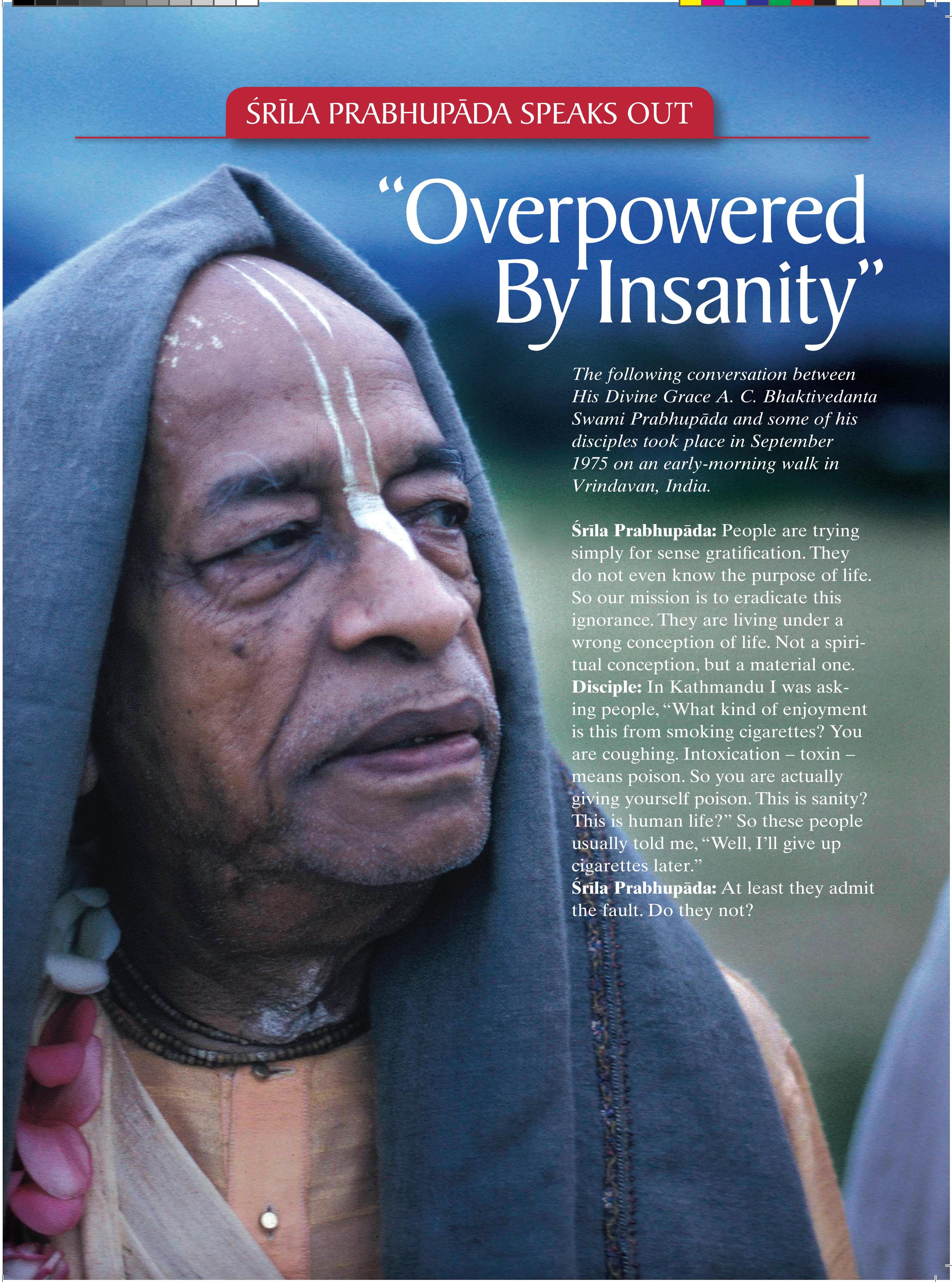
sā – she; *tat* – that food; *pum-savanam* – which produces a male child; *rājñī* – the Queen; *prāśya* – eating; *vai* – indeed; *patyuḥ* – from the husband; *ādadhe* – conceived; *garbham* – pregnancy; *kāle* – when the due time; *upāvṛtte* – appeared; *kumāram* – a son; *suṣuve* – gave birth to; *aprajā* – having no son.

Although the Queen had no son, after eating that food, which had the power to produce a male child, she became pregnant by her husband, and in due course of time she gave birth to a son.

[*Continued in the next issue.*]

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

"Overpowered By Insanity"



The following conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and some of his disciples took place in September 1975 on an early-morning walk in Vrindavan, India.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: People are trying simply for sense gratification. They do not even know the purpose of life. So our mission is to eradicate this ignorance. They are living under a wrong conception of life. Not a spiritual conception, but a material one.

Disciple: In Kathmandu I was asking people, "What kind of enjoyment is this from smoking cigarettes? You are coughing. Intoxication – toxin – means poison. So you are actually giving yourself poison. This is sanity? This is human life?" So these people usually told me, "Well, I'll give up cigarettes later."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: At least they admit the fault. Do they not?

Disciple: Yes, some people do. I reminded all these people about karma. You know: "According to your activity in this life, you're preparing your next life. If you live a spiritual life, you'll go to the spiritual world. If you live a materialistic life – animalistic – you'll stay in the material world and become an animal." And they all admitted. "Yes. I know about the law of karma." But when I said. "Why don't you serve Kṛṣṇa?" they said, "Later. Later."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Disciple: So, Śrīla Prabhupāda, can your instructions in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* stop these people's lust? Or do we have to hope that somehow they will be frustrated in their attempts to enjoy sense gratification?

These are signs of how desperate people are, how disappointed with their life of materialism. They are always ready to commit suicide.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They are being frustrated. Who is successful in the material world? Can you name any instance in which someone has really been successful?

Disciple: Everywhere in this material world, people are miserable. In America, Amy Vanderbilt, the famous etiquette expert, jumped out of her window.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: There are many.

Disciple: Oh, yes. In San Diego and also in San Francisco, they have these fences so that when people jump off the bridges, they are caught by the fences.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: And I think in Berkeley they had to enclose the top of the clock tower with glass?

Disciple: Oh, yes, at the University of California – to keep the students from jumping off.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: These are signs of how desperate people are, how disappointed with their life of materialism. They are always ready to commit suicide. Some thirty years ago, a man was sitting near me in a railway car, and all of a sudden he jumped through the window. All of a sudden. He had been sitting nicely. What he was thinking I do not know. But he took the opportunity of the open window and jumped. I saw it.

Disciple: A kind of insanity overpowered him.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Insanity. Everyone is overpowered by insanity. Everyone who is trying to be happy in this material world – everyone is overpowered by insanity. They do not know the only solution is, as Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja:* "Just surrender to Me." (*Gītā* 18.66) But that they'll not do. Anything but surrender to Kṛṣṇa.

Disciple: I was telling these Indian people that in America the big thing is they want to "raise the standard of living," but even those people who have raised the standard of living are also killing themselves. But many times these Indian people don't want to listen. "Our goal is economic development," they say. "That is the top priority."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Obstinacy. Dog's obstinacy. Now they are busy manufacturing various types of religious systems so that one may not have to surrender to Kṛṣṇa. This is going on. Big, big swamis are saying, "Yes, whatever you manufacture, it is all right." *Yathā mata tathā patha:* "Whatever you concoct, that is all right." So people are content. If somebody said, "You surrender unto me," that would not be very palatable. When somebody says, "No, you can surrender to anyone," that is very palatable.

Disciple: Because that means no surrender. To surrender to anyone means no surrender.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Disciple: Sometimes people say, "When Kṛṣṇa wills it that I surrender to Him, then I will do it."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Such rascaldom. You think that Kṛṣṇa is not willing it, rascal, when He says in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* "You must do this – you must surrender to Me"?

Disciple: Sometimes people say, "When Kṛṣṇa makes my heart open to Him, then I will surrender."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But you have no heart. You have simply stone. In the words of one devotional song: "My heart is harder than a stone. I know that chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa can melt even a stone, but it does not melt my heart. Therefore I think my heart must be harder than a stone."

Disciple: Some of these religious systems even say that it is offensive to say the name of God.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: What can I do? If these rascals say something like that, what can I do?

Disciple: Even when they write the word *God,* they don't write "God." They write "G—d," so that they've indicated God but they haven't said "God." It's too holy to pronounce. That's what they say.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: They might as well say, "G-zero-d." [*Laughter.*] That would nicely convey their idea of God.

Disciple: Zero signifies their love for Him.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Zero is controlling both sides, G and d. If you multiply something by zero, what does it become?

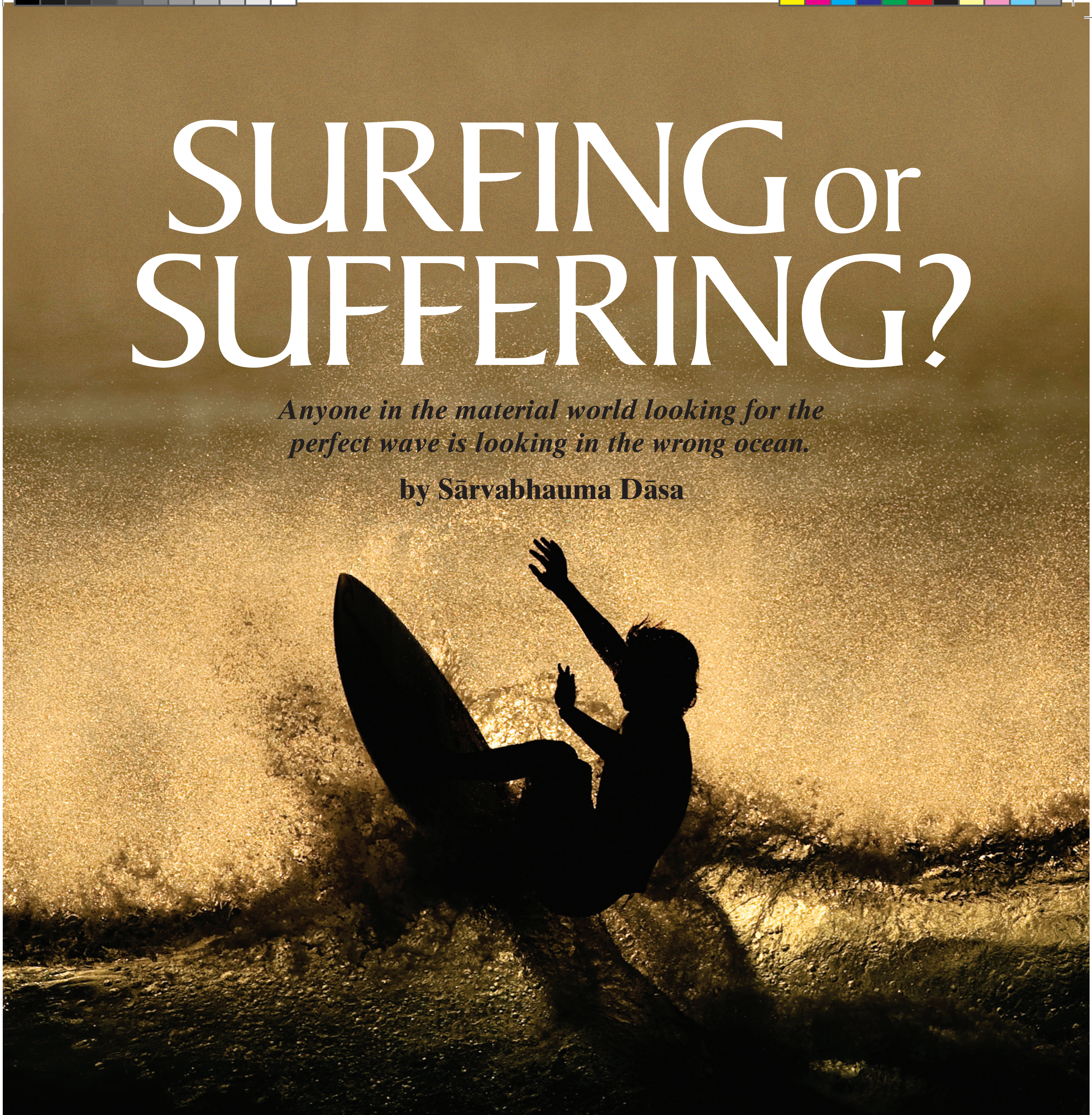
Disciple: Zero.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That's all. This kind of thinking is *śūnyavādī,* voidist. It is successful suicide. But we know life is not void, because God is not zero.

SURFING or SUFFERING?

Anyone in the material world looking for the perfect wave is looking in the wrong ocean.

by Sārvabhauma Dāsa



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IN HER BOOK *Prabhupāda Stories*, Govinda Dāsī recalls her spiritual master's reaction when he first witnessed American boys sporting in the ocean in 1967:

> **Sometimes when sitting on the beach blanket in New Jersey, Śrīla Prabhupāda would look out at the waves while chanting *japa*. He was very beautiful and serene, always absorbed in Kṛṣṇa, yet also carefully scrutinizing the world around him. On some days there were big waves and surfer boys would be out, swimming and surfing in the waves. Śrīla Prabhupāda watched with great interest as they mounted their boards and slid down the faces of the waves. He asked us: "What is this?" Gaurasundara and I replied that this is a sport called "surfing" . . . Śrīla Prabhupāda watched intently for some time, then began to chuckle. He said: "You call it surfing; I call it suffering. They are simply wasting their valuable human form of life by jumping in the ocean waves. They have no idea what will happen next. If they become so**

> much fond of remaining on the ocean, then Kṛṣṇa is very kind: he will satisfy their desire and give them bodies of fishes so that they can enjoy jumping in the ocean more and more, but that will be greater suffering. *So I call them sufferers, not surfers.*" He mused as he continued his eternal chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, softly and serenely, with the crashing ocean waves in the background.

I grew up in Manhattan Beach, California, a hotbed of surfing and the home of a pioneer in the sport who attended my high school: Dewey Weber. One of the most famous and innovative surfers of his time, Weber seemed to derive a lot of pleasure from surfing. Was Prabhupāda being unduly pessimistic? After all, writers glorified the enviable, apparently pleasurable position Weber enjoyed in the sport in his heyday:

Now I had to catch one of those massive walls of water, stand up on the board, and try to be an *īśvara* (controller).

> Dewey Weber was part of the group of people who turned their backs on society in the hedonistic pursuit of the perfect wave . . . a great *artiste*, dedicated to his calling, a guru of a powerful American culture. If you were a surfer, or even one of the tens of millions of Highway Surfers who never set foot on a board, Dewey Weber was a god, the Pan of the Pipeline. The Beach Boys' music and Hollywood movies promoted the Southern California surfing culture. A small, energetic towhead, laid-back but filled with bravado, Weber was the quintessential surfer who spent his life pursuing the endless summer of California and Hawaiian beaches. He was the undisputed champ of the 1950s and '60s . . . a legend.

In 1993, after I had been a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa for more than a decade in Texas and had pretty much forgotten about surfing, I received a letter from my mother that included a newspaper clipping: "Surfing's Dewey Weber Dies at 53." I was shocked, because Dewey had always seemed to be on top of the world; on a surfboard he literally played with the waves, as a cat toys with a mouse. But now he had "wiped out," surfing slang for when a surfer loses control or balance and falls hard or crashes in the water. And his was the ultimate loss of control – the final wipeout – death. Although Weber did not die while surfing, the article seemed to support Śrīla Prabhupāda's conclusion that material life itself inescapably involves suffering; nobody can avoid its existential distresses (*kleśas*) – by surfing or any other mundane means.

> Recently, Mr. Weber had been ill with what his doctor reported was a failing liver, says Hermosa Beach police Cmdr. Mark Lavin. In recent years, Mr. Weber ran a surf shop in Hermosa Beach but . . . suffered setbacks because of a drinking problem, a divorce and the death of his father, his friends say. Dewey's surfing friend Lance Carson recalled, "He had these personal things that were like his millstone around his neck. It is a sad story, but he will be remembered for all the good things he did for surfing."

As a former surfer, I've always marveled at the mystery and power of the ocean. Sometimes the weather is sunny and the ocean bestows beautifully formed waves, causing a surfer to feel giddy. At other times, the same sea can be dark and foreboding, spewing treacherous riptides, tidal waves, tsunamis, sharks, or stinging jellyfish. It is no surprise that Govinda Dāsa, a great Vaiṣṇava poet of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, characterized material existence as *bhava-sindhu*, an "ocean of nescience." That ocean is *cañcalā*, or unpredictable. It is a watery juggernaut that can easily wipe us out, as evidenced by the calamity of the Titanic: The state-of-the-art luxury liner, touted as a ship that could never sink, was swallowed by the frigid North Atlantic Sea.

Trouble in the Waves

As a teenager I enjoyed many pleasant surfing experiences, but my two most memorable ones each proved to be traumatic. Once when I was twelve years old, a huge Pacific Ocean swell hit the California coast, generating powerful fifteen-foot waves. I enjoyed surfing, but was afraid of really massive surf, so I decided to stay home.

Then Bill Leis, one of my friends and quite a daredevil, came to my parents' home and said, "Hey, man – surf's up! Let's go."

I presented various excuses, but Bill could see that I was afraid, and we started to argue. My father told us to be quiet, so we went outside, where our argument turned into a fistfight. Bill was taller than me and tough, and he bullied me into submission. My penalty? I had to carry my surfboard behind him for a showdown with the furious ocean. I had no illusions about who was going to win.

It took me about ten minutes – a tremendous struggle – just to paddle out beyond the incessant breakers. Once I got past the crashing waves, I felt relieved, but a bigger challenge confronted me: Now I had to catch one of those massive walls of water, stand up on the board, and try to be an *īśvara* (controller) as I rode it to shore while trying to avoid getting wiped out.

I froze up, unable to muster the nerve to "go for it." For more than an hour I hesitated and stalled until it became noontime, when lifeguards hoisted a yellow flag, signaling that

Can One Dovetail Surfing with Kṛṣṇa Consciousness?

SOME READERS who are attracted to *bhakti-yoga* may enjoy a sport such as surfing, seeing it as a harmless form of recreation. In fact, in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (6.17) Lord Kṛṣṇa includes moderate recreation (*vihāra*) as part of a balanced, yogic lifestyle: "He who is temperate in his habits of eating, sleeping, working, and recreation can mitigate all material pains by practicing the yoga system."

HARIBOL!
SURFBOARDS

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Furthermore, unlike more violent sports such as hunting, fishing, boxing, or football, surfing involves minimal harm to living beings or the environment. While all this is true, surfing in itself is not a genuine *sādhana,* or spiritual practice, that can lead to cessation of material suffering, as the examples of Dewey Weber and thousands of other surfers amply show.

Śrīla Prabhupāda stated that daily chanting sixteen rounds of the *mahā-mantra* – Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare – while avoiding meat, fish, and eggs, illicit sex, intoxication, and gambling, constitutes an effective means to transcend this material world and its concomitant suffering. To chant sixteen rounds attentively takes between one and a half and two and a half hours every day. Surfing in the ocean (or on the Internet) eats up precious time and can be a distraction for a serious devotee. It boils down to priorities: What is most important and effective?

Nāmācārya Haridāsa Ṭhākura chanted constantly, associated with elevated devotees, and heard the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa; and he attained a level of ecstasy so sublime that it could not be shaken by the severe material distress of being violently beaten in twenty-two marketplaces, nor could it be distracted by the most bewitching prostitute. Dewey Weber surfed constantly, associated with surfers, talked about surfing, built and sold surfboards, yet what was his result?

If a devotee is so attracted to surfing that he cannot give it up, but at the same time realizes the superior value of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he should at least vow to not go surfing until he completes the chanting of his daily prescribed number of rounds. But what if a surfer cannot even do that? On at least one occasion, Śrīla Prabhupāda reportedly said that if even a drunkard chants the holy name of the Lord between each sip of liquor, he will make spiritual advancement. In a class on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.8.22) in Los Angeles in 1973, Prabhupāda elaborated:

> Nothing is bad, but because if a thing creates bad effects, then it is bad. So I shall request even the drunkards . . . In your country, there are many drunkards. There is no scarcity. "So if you'll kindly remember, when drinking wine, that this nice taste of drinking is Kṛṣṇa. . . . Just begin with it. You'll come out, one day, a saintly person, Kṛṣṇa conscious." It's so nice, practical.

Similarly, if a surfer chants Hare Kṛṣṇa while waiting for a wave, while catching a wave, while riding a wave, or while wiping out, he can gradually perfect his human form of life. Otherwise, would you prefer to be a sardine or a squid?

all surfers had to immediately get out of the water. The other remaining surfers quickly caught waves to shore, leaving me as the last one in the water. Finally, a lifeguard shouted over a megaphone: "Hey you in the green trunks! Come in *now*. Catch the next wave, or else you're in trouble!"

I had no choice. To my chagrin, the next wave was awesome, one of the biggest of the day. As I paddled towards the shore in front of that massive mountain of water, suddenly my board picked up speed and I stood up, plummeting down the steep face of the wave. After a dizzying drop of about fifteen feet, I hit the bottom of the monstrous wave, slipped off the board, and was crushed by an avalanche of water. *Wipe out!*

For ten or fifteen frantic seconds I was trapped underwater, fighting for air, upside-down, and ripped helplessly by the violent currents, unable to reach the surface. I didn't think of God or anything sublime; my only emotion was gut-wrenching fear for my life. I probably felt very much like a fish must feel when caught in a net and pulled out of the water.

Years later, I was struck by a passage in Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*:

> Caitanya Mahāprabhu gives a very nice example . . . Formerly a king used to punish a criminal by dunking him in the river, raising him up again for breath, and then again dunking him in the water. Material nature punishes and rewards the individual entity in just the same way. When he is punished, he is dunked in the water of material miseries, and when he is rewarded, he is taken out of it for some time.

Even after this miserable experience, whenever the ocean displayed a more friendly face I continued to surf. One day about a year later, thousands of surfers were enjoying ideal conditions in gorgeous medium-sized waves all along the southern California coast. On that beautiful sunny day I was surfing off Tenth Street in Manhattan Beach. It was so enjoyable that it would be difficult for any of us surfers to agree that "surfers are sufferers."

But then one of my surfing companions noticed something strange: A surfboard had washed up on the shore near Ninth Street, but the boy who owned the board was nowhere to be seen. When informed of this, the lifeguards suspected the worst: Perhaps the boy had been struck in the head by his surfboard, had been knocked unconscious, and had drowned.

Suddenly, our "perfect" day of surfing turned grotesque. On their megaphones, the lifeguards requested all of us to bring our surfboards in to the beach. We were asked to reenter the water, link hands to create a human chain, and wade through the shallow water in an attempt find the corpse of the wiped-out surfer. I remember the eerie feeling of walking in that chain; I desperately hoped that we *wouldn't* find that corpse. I certainly didn't want to be the one whose legs brushed against it. How dramatically our enjoying spirit was extinguished by the waves of material existence that day! Eventually, the Coast Guard recovered the boy's bloated body a few miles away. Momentarily we were forced to think seriously about material life. Although this calamity severely jolted our ability to enjoy the material world – in this case, through the sport of surfing – for most of us our sense of gravity or sobriety did not last very long. Śrīla Prabhupāda explains this phenomenon:

> *Śmaśāna-vairāgya* ["crematorium detachment"] means that in India, the Hindus, they burn the dead body. So relatives take the dead body for burning to the burning *ghāṭa*, and when the body is burned, everyone present there, for the time being, they become [a] little renounced: "Oh, this is the body. We are working for this body. Now it is finished. It is burnt into ashes. So what is the benefit?" This kind of *vairāgya*, renouncement, is there. But as soon as he comes from the burning *ghāṭa*, he again begins his activities. In the *śmaśāna*, the burn-

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Toronto's Festival of India in Photos

MADHAVA SMULLEN. PHOTOS BY BRIAN BATISTA BETTENCOURT | This year, celebrating its 40th anniversary, Festival of India hosted a series of public events, with more unique features than ever. ISKCON News takes a look at some of those highlights in photos.

D.C. Gardener Encourages City Temples to Go Green

MADHAVA SMULLEN | As environmentally-friendly living becomes more and more of a concern in a modern society where Earth's resources are fast running out, ISKCON has an increasing responsibility to set a good example.

ISKCON Invited for EU Commission President Meeting

KUMARI KUNTI SHERREITT | This year the Hindu Forum of Europe's (HFE) President Bharti Tailor with General Secretary Mahaprabhu Das (also the Director of ISKCON Communications Europe) represented the Hindu faith for this important meeting.

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> ing *ghāṭa*, he becomes renounced. And [yet] as soon as [he] comes home, again he is vigorous, vigorous, how to earn, how to get money, how to get money, how to get money. So this kind of *vairāgya* is called *śmaśāna-vairāgya*, temporary.
>
> (Lecture, London, July 24, 1973)

Our *vairāgya,* or detachment, was temporary: Quickly this ghastly experience retreated to our subconscious minds and we were out surfing again.

In his introduction to *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is,* Śrīla Prabhupāda explains how everything in material existence ultimately entails suffering, because material pleasures exist on a flimsy background of impermanence.

The Pracetās performed austerities in the water – not in the mood of material enjoyment like surfers, but for spiritual advancement.

> The purpose of *Bhagavad-gītā* is to deliver mankind from the nescience of material existence. Every man is in difficulty in so many ways, as Arjuna also was in difficulty in having to fight the Battle of Kurukṣetra. Arjuna surrendered unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and consequently this *Bhagavad-gītā* was spoken. Not only Arjuna, but every one of us is full of anxieties because of this material existence. *Our very existence is in the atmosphere of nonexistence.* [my italics] Actually we are not meant to be threatened by nonexistence. Our existence is eternal. But somehow or other we are put into *asat*. *Asat* refers to that which does not exist.

Another View Of Dewey Weber

When our surfing peer died that day, a naked truth graphically hit home: However alluring it appears, surfing can never be a panacea for the tribulations of material existence. Reflecting on Śrīla Prabhupāda's opinion of surfing and my own experience, I now see Dewey Weber in a different light. While I still admire him as a great surfer and a creative, free spirit who searched for the perfect wave, according to Prabhupāda, "Unless one is awakened to this position of questioning his suffering, unless he realizes that he doesn't want suffering but rather wants to make a solution to all suffering, then one is not to be considered a perfect human being." (*Gītā,* Introduction)

Sometimes I wonder about Dewey Weber's fate. Has he actually taken birth as a fish? At this very moment is he swimming in the waves of Malibu, Bondi Beach, or Hawaii, or does he find himself in the belly of a shark or pelican? Perhaps. But due to Śrīla Prabhupāda's mercy there is another possibility: Because Weber flew many times to Hawaii from Los Angeles International Airport during the 1960s, '70s, and '80s – when Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees were distributing thousands of copies of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* and other transcendental books at that airport – there is a strong likelihood that he received at least one of Prabhupāda's transcendental books. At the ignoble end of his life, he had every reason to question his suffering and may have turned to one of those books for answers. In that case, a better future awaited him, perhaps similar to that of Ālālanātha Dāsa.

Surfing in the Nectar of Devotion

Ālālanātha Dāsa was one of the many surfers who became devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa in Melbourne, Australia, in the 1970s.

"Surfing was the only life I knew, [but] my anxiety increased day by day as I watched the force of time taking it all away from me. As my powers began to ebb, I had to face the fact that younger surfers would replace me. The life of professional [surfing] competition had meant a constant effort at building up a false ego – an image of myself as the supreme enjoyer. Now I saw my real identity as just a servant of the actual Supreme Enjoyer – God. By the time I finished the *Bhagavad-gītā* in early 1976, I was a full-time devotee of Kṛṣṇa in the Melbourne temple."

Hari-śauri Dāsa recalls another Australian young man, Charles, who was so addicted to surfing that he legally changed his last name; he became Charles Ofthesea ("of the sea"). By this adjustment, Charles seems to have been moving closer to becoming an aquatic in his next birth, just as countless surfers or scuba-divers who wear fishlike rubber wet-suits are tangibly transforming even in this life to be more like aquatics – psychologically and physically. Fortunately, however, like Ālālanātha Dāsa, Charles seriously took up *bhakti-yoga.* Eventually, Śrīla Prabhupada blessed him with spiritual initiation and gave Charles a second, devotional name-change: Pracetā Dāsa. The Pracetās are described in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as spiritually inclined brothers who performed austerities in the water – not in the mood of material enjoyment like surfers, but for spiritual advancement. Like the Pracetās, we can use water or other material things Kṛṣṇa consciously to get out of suffering, or we can misuse them and drown in the ocean of material existence, where there are no perfect waves but plenty of wipeouts.

Although Śrīla Prabhupāda was rightly pessimistic about the material sport of surfing, on a morning walk in Durban, South Africa, in 1975 his disciple Puṣṭa Kṛṣṇa Dāsa

Photo by Indradyumna Swami

Hare Kṛṣṇa
Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa
Hare Hare
Hare Rāma
Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma
Hare Hare

PRONUNCIATION:
ha-ray, krish-na,
ra-ma (rhymes with "drama").

To hear Śrīla Prabhupāda chanting, go to krishna.com/transcendental-vibration.

shared a realization with him about how Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees enjoy a higher form of surfing.

"We tell them [surfers], 'Yes, we surf in the ocean of *bhakti-rasa* [the sublime taste of devotional service].'"

From a similar perspective, Jayānanda Prabhu, an exemplary disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda who passed away in 1977, sought to befriend surfers and to attract them to experience that higher spiritual taste, as Hari-vallabha Dāsa recalls in the book *Rādhā-Dāmodara Vilāsa*:

"Jayānanda would quote Prabhupāda, but he was always really interested to hear what you had to say. 'Oh, you surf? Wow! What's it like to ride those big waves?' He'd get right into it with you. He didn't say that surfing is *māyā*. He was never like that. 'Yeah, I'd like to do that – ride those big waves.' He would just be your friend."

Unlike my bullying "friend" Bill, who inadvertently tried to coerce me to "wipe out" in the waves of material existence, Śrīla Prabhupāda and his sincere servants such as Jayānanda Prabhu are our true friends and eternal well-wishers. Motivated solely by causeless mercy and compassion, they invite us to sport and surf in *bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, the ocean of the nectar of devotion, in the mood of *sevā* (service), as blissful servants rather than self-centered sufferers. ❁

Sārvabhauma Dāsa, a disciple of Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami, is based in Houston, Texas, where he engages in various Kṛṣṇa conscious preaching and writing projects.

SUFFERING HUMANITY

(*continued from page 10*)

can simply chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. This movement has become important and of interest. Our books are being purchased by the topmost class of men. Big, big professors in the universities are giving standing orders for the books that are not yet published. Here our *sannyāsī* is present, Satsvarūpa. He is visiting the libraries, universities, professors, and we are getting very good response.

Don't take it as a sectarian movement. Don't misunderstand this movement as a CIA movement. These are all foolish ideas. Do you think the Americans are such fools that to propagate their CIA movement they will become Vaiṣṇavas and chant and dance? The Americans have become such fools? No. They have taken it very seriously. They are not CIA, not Americans, not Europeans. They are Vaiṣṇavas; they are servants of Kṛṣṇa. Don't misunderstand them. Try to cooperate and help this movement for the benefit of the whole human society.

Thank you very much. ❁

PESSIMISTIC

(*continued from page 23*)

glued to the pursuit of that illusory pleasure, the more we regain our rightful real happiness in spiritual love for God.

Our real life – our eternal life in the spiritual world – is far more dignified than the indignities our bodies subject us to, far more graceful than the disgraces the world buffets us with. Our real life is the life of spirit, the life of freedom, the life of joy, the life of eternity. The *Bhagavad-gītā* proclaims that our real life is beyond the life of this miserable, material world. Our real life fulfills our innate longing for immortality. Therein, our intrinsic longing for love is eternally and completely fulfilled by reposing it in the all-attractive all-loving eternal Supreme Person, God, Kṛṣṇa. That life of love is our real life, not our present ugly and unfortunate caricature of life we mistakenly label as real life.

That's why the *Gītā* (8.15) urges us to return from the material world where we presently live to the spiritual world where we belong.

Despite this apparent rejection of the *here* in favor of the *hereafter,* the *Gītā* (18.78) concludes by an assurance of success in the here. This demonstrates the *Gītā's* message of connection, not rejection: the connection of the here with the hereafter, not the rejection of the here for the hereafter. Indeed, the *Gītā* declares that the here is also the kingdom of God (5.29), which Kṛṣṇa cares about so much that He descends here repeatedly (4.7) to reestablish the virtuous order (4.8) that will help people reach the spiritual world (4.9). The *Gītā* (11.32–33) further indicates that by acting responsibly in service to God in the here, we can assist Him in preserving and promoting the order here.

If we care only for the here, we will become attached to the here and blinded to the hereafter, thus depriving ourselves of our right to eternal happiness. If we care only for the hereafter, we will become apathetic and irresponsible about the here, thus failing to play our part in Kṛṣṇa's plan to preserve order in the here.

By keeping in mind the beauty, the glory, and the eternality of the spiritual world, we can immunize ourselves against being enamored by the fleeting pleasures and the deluding promises of this world. By keeping in mind the role of the material world as the arena that shapes us for attaining the spiritual world, we can face the challenges of this world with determination and wisdom. That's why the *Gītā* (8.7) exhorts us to a dynamic balance between the here and the hereafter: Aspire wholeheartedly for the spiritual world and act responsibly in this one. ❁

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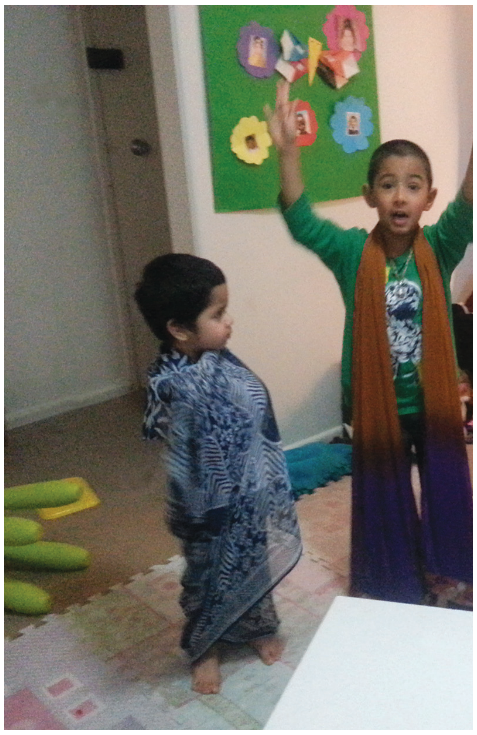
Playing With Kṛṣṇa

Introducing Kṛṣṇa consciousness to young children through play.

by Suvarṇa Rādhikā Devī Dāsī

PUJARI OF THE DAY

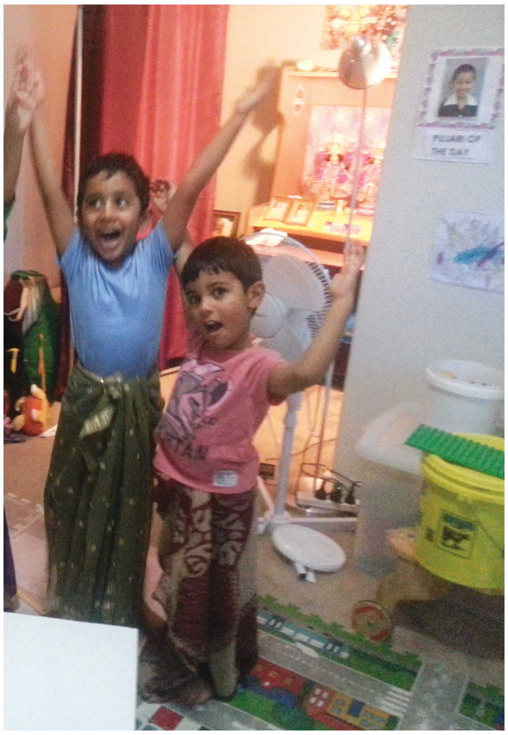


IN ONE CORNER of my preschool room, two four-year-old boys are pretending to be Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Tying shiny scarves on their heads and waists, they wrestle with an imaginary Dhenukāsura. In another corner, a three-year-old girl is playing with wooden blocks. She stacks them up to make a temple. Enthusiastically, she shows me the altar and the temple hall. Near the bookshelf, a fourth child is reading Dr. Edith Best's books with the pre-recorded reading device. Chants of *oṁ namo bhagavate vāsudevāya* fill the room. I smile. For me, this is Vṛndāvana.

The preschool age is wonderful because children start exploring and understanding the world they live in. They begin to communicate thoughts, ideas, and emotions. They are eager to learn and absorb new words, new skills, and new ideas.

Unfortunately, with today's hectic lifestyle, parents feel they don't have the time to meaningfully engage children of this age group. They are too young to go to school full time. They don't have the attention span for long periods of academic learning. Playgroup lasts for only about half the day, and for the remaining time the bored and unoccupied child may end up in front of the television or computer screen. Even if the child is playing, undirected play means the child constantly seeks new stimulation.

Preschool children play the drums they made to take part in Lord Caitanya's saṅkīrtana *movement (right). Below (left to right), they focus their attention on "the pastime of the day" by creating Jarikhanda Forest for Lord Caitanya, dressing up as cowherd boys and girls, and playing with arrows for a scene from the* Mahābhārata.



He plays with one toy for some time and then discards it for another, eventually getting bored and tired.

Moreover, the limited time in human life is being wasted. Human life is rare and precious, and the advanced intelligence given to humanity is meant to be used for God consciousness and self-realization. In fact, spiritual life must be started from the earliest possible age so that the child grows up being aware of his duties as an eternal spiritual soul. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.6.1), the great devotee Prahlāda teaches his friends, "One who is sufficiently intelligent should use the human form of body from the very beginning of life – in other words, from the tender age of childhood – to practice the activities of devotional service, giving up all other engagements."

Hence young children need to be meaningfully occupied in God consciousness by engaging them in games and activities centered on Kṛṣṇa. I have the opportunity to teach children in a Kṛṣṇa conscious preschool in my home in Melbourne, Australia, and have seen the spiritual growth and positive impact on behavior and learning that a God-conscious environment has on the minds of young children. Such an environment can be created without much effort at home.

The children present the Nṛsiṁha masks they colored while learning about Lord Kṛṣṇa's ten pastime incarnations.

Introducing Kṛṣṇa Conscious Routines

Children thrive on routines. Routines make them feel secure because they know what to expect. They also help the children build confidence as they gradually master through regular practice the skills the routines require. Hence it is never too early to establish Kṛṣṇa conscious routines.

Preschoolers can be introduced to a simplified morning routine to mimic what they might experience at an ISKCON temple. They can perform a simple *ārati* to the deity, or to a Kṛṣṇa doll, and circumambulate Tulasī Devī for Tulasī-pūjā. At my preschool, the children hold hands and walk around Tulasī Devī, ring-around-the-rosey style, singing, "Here we go 'round the *tulasī* tree" to the tune of "Here we go 'round the mulberry bush." Then we all sit down and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa together – one round of *japa* on a strand of twenty-seven beads. This is followed by an energetic *guru-pūjā kīrtana* in which the children play *karatālas* and jump and dance enthusiastically.

I introduced this routine gradually, adding one new item each day over a week. Initially, the children were slow to fully participate, singing softly and chanting distractedly. But as the children kept doing the routine daily, with my encouragement and appreciation for every success, they became more enthusiastic. They now participate without reservation. They chant *japa* loudly, with backs straight and eyes closed.

I also have *prasāda* routines, during which the children say *prasāda* prayers together before honoring *prasāda.* While eating, they listen to a recorded reading of the children's version of Śrīla Prabhupāda's "Kṛṣṇa Book." This routine has helped to make teaching *prasāda* etiquette very easy. They do not talk or run around during meals, because they are absorbed in listening to the story.

Exploring Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes Through Crafts

Preschoolers love arts and crafts. Not only does this sort of activity give them an outlet for their creativity and imagination, it also helps build hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills, important foundations for future academic study. And dovetailing creativity with Kṛṣṇa consciousness can be an enriching devotional experience for a child.

At my preschool, I connect each craft to the "pastime of the day." For example, while studying the *Rāmāyaṇa* we use sand and blue, green, and golden glitter paint to create the bridge between India and Sri Lanka. Similarly, we make Nṛsiṁhadeva masks and paper-bowl tortoises while studying the Daśāvatāras, and stick arrows and paper-bag demon puppets while reading the *Mahābhārata.* These projects not only enable the children to understand the pastimes more deeply but also give them Kṛṣṇa-related toys to play with. They automatically use the toys to reenact the Lord's pastimes in their play and are thus fully absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

The crafts need not be complicated; in fact, they must be simple so that the children can complete them themselves and feel successful. A few readily available materials like cardboard, colored paper of different types, scissors, glue, paint, and foam cups and bowls can help children create their versions of beautiful devotional paraphernalia.

Kṛṣṇa in Sound

Have you ever wondered why we don't forget our childhood nursery rhymes? It's due to the power of the brain at the tender ages of three to six. During this period, the brain is as impressionable as wet cement – any input becomes hardened for life. Hence it is critical to give children devotional songs and prayers early on. They will remember them for the rest of their lives.

There is a wealth of Kṛṣṇa conscious rhymes and songs made specifically for little children. Most of these are available freely on kids.iskcondesiretree.info. Apart from these songs, I also practice Sanskrit verses and *bhajanas* with the kids. There are many simple *bhajanas* that children can easily pick up, like "Vibhāvarī Śeṣa" or "Kṛṣṇa Jinka Nām Hai." Sanskrit can also be introduced through *maṅgalācaraṇa* prayers or the verses of the *Brahma-saṁhitā* or *Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka.* When I repeat Sanskrit prayers daily and progress slowly, one verse at a time, the children absorb them quickly and easily. You will be amazed at how fluently they soon start reciting them.

Kṛṣṇa Conscious Toys

There is a wide selection of Kṛṣṇa conscious toys being made by devotees. Soft toys, action figures, puzzles, and wooden dolls are all available. It is important to create an environment that allows the children to introduce Kṛṣṇa into their play. For example, we can give them manipulative toys that allow them to recreate the devotional life they see around them. Wooden and Lego blocks and figurines of animals or people can be given for open-ended construction and imaginative play. Children will use them to make temples, Jagannātha carts, and Vṛndāvana scenes. Similarly, modeling clay allows children to "cook" rotis, cookies, cakes, and vegetables for Kṛṣṇa. If *ārati* paraphernalia, decorative cloth, and beaded jewelry are kept around, children will use them to decorate and worship Kṛṣṇa dolls. And keeping shiny cloth in blue, yellow, and red along with craft feathers and other decorations will give them a chance to dress up like Kṛṣṇa or the cowherd boys and girls.

Sometimes adults may need to model the use of these props in a Kṛṣṇa conscious manner to encourage children to bring Kṛṣṇa into their games. But if children are growing up in Vaiṣṇava culture, they may automatically use these toys to imitate the adults around them.

It is a child's great fortune to have been born in a Vaiṣṇava family. The spark of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, preserved from previous lifetimes, is already there in that fortunate soul's heart. With a little fanning from adults, natural love for Lord Kṛṣṇa can ignite. Both children and adults can then take joy in the increasing devotional mood of the family.

Suvarṇa Rādhikā Devī Dāsī has been practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness for the last fifteen years. She is a software engineer and a Bharat Natyam dancer and has certification in childcare. Visit her blog: kanhaspreschool.blogspot.com.au.

GOVERNANCE

(*continued from page 27*)

people who act responsibly for their future lives, instead of self-serving people with a narrow vision.

Where modern education promotes indiscriminate competitiveness, spiritual education encourages cooperation. Human life is for *athāto brahma-jijñāsā* – for spiritual inquiry. It is a rare opportunity to go back home to Godhead and should not be frittered away by indulging simply in sense gratification, which is available even in lower forms of life. Instead of competing with others, each of us should try to conquer the real problems of life: birth, death, old age, and disease. Every living entity – not only the fittest — has the right to live. Everyone can live because Kṛṣṇa provides for all.

2. Environment. Protection of the environment shall be a cornerstone of Kṛṣṇa conscious governance. Our environment is the source of our wealth and therefore has to be handled carefully and responsibly. The urban/industrial lifestyle is largely responsible for the environmental crisis, which includes pollution not only of the air, water, and land, but also of consciousness. We will not solve the world's environmental problems until people reduce their desires for material consumption. This is possible only if people gain tangible experience of superior forms of happiness and satisfaction, which the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement offers through the practice of *bhakti-yoga* and especially through Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra meditation.

Unless we protect the environment, soon there will not be enough water, and the air will be unfit to breathe. To bring about change will require a government that can explain to the people why they need radical change to protect the environment. What is the use of high-speed cars, jets, and computers if there is not enough water to drink or food to eat?

The degrading physical and mental health of our children is another issue that needs to be focused on. The rise of deadly diseases and the mounting cost of medical bills all reveal that we have neglected the environment to gratify our desire for unlimited sense gratification.

3. Ban on cow slaughter. Killing the cow makes the worst economic sense. The cow gives milk, the wonder food necessary to develop fine tissues in the brain. Various milk preparations can be used to feed the large population. The cow lives on grass and does not compete with the human beings for food. Cow dung is used to produce *gobar* gas. A *gobar* gas research station in Uttar Pradesh has shown that one cow gives enough cow dung in a year to produce methane gas equivalent to 225 liters of petrol. Cow dung is pure. Even an old cow unable to produce milk can pay for its subsistence by the cow dung it produces. According to our scriptures, people who feed on cow meat will be damned to the nether regions of hell for lifetimes equal to the number of hairs on the cow's body.

Being the supplier of milk, the cow is considered our mother. The imperialist British found that the strength of India in agriculture was based on the cow. Because cow products (including urine, a great disinfectant, and dung, the best manure) competed with their economic interests, the British decided to slaughter the cows. After India's independence, many leaders spoke out against cow slaughter, but very little has been done. On the contrary, slaughterhouses have increased, and cows are exported to face the butcher's blade. No meaningful civilization can flourish when the mother is slaughtered to meet the demands of our tongue.

What Are Our Advantages And Disadvantages?

Advantages:

- We are largely a very disciplined group.
- We have a large network of devotees and volunteers spread over the whole of India and the world.
- Our philosophy and principles are easily workable and effective, as demonstrated by rulers of ancient India like Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja, Parīkṣit Mahārāja, and many others.
- We have the answers to the problems facing modern society.
- We have been able to penetrate the masses, and they contribute the major vote.
- Our philosophy is easily saleable to the youth, who can contribute to the work force.

Disadvantages:

- Power could corrupt the organization.
- Now we are relatively insulated from the world. Direct involvement may introduce negative influences from outside.
- ISKCON devotees could face harassment by vested interests.

What Can We Do?

The world needs impeccable leaders with vision, commitment, and integrity. And which organization in the world can provide such leaders? Most of our present political parties and institutions are incapable of providing such leadership. Devotees who are free from material allurements, who have transcended the desire for name, fame, and money, can fill the slot. We can make the difference.

The world has seen our beautiful temples, festivals, and programs. There are already quite a few initiatives by ISKCON devotees, such as rural communities, *varṇāśrama* communities, cow protection programs, Food for Life programs, spiritual education projects, and movements to protect rivers and the environment. For greater thrust, these initiatives and others require political support.

If you share my desire to see devotees more active in the political sphere, please contact me at the email address below so that we can begin discussing possibilities. A group of devotees will need to come together to form political parties in various countries or ally with parties that would support our policies, thus giving us a say in government. Success may not be immediate, but if we persevere, we can succeed. People are looking for a change, and we are that change.

We devotees would like to save the earth and its inhabitants. For those who would like to come together and work towards a common goal, this is an opportunity. We approach politics in a way that is compassionate, holistic, responsible, and more alive than the politics of divide and rule, the politics of misinformation, the politics of might is right. We approach politics on the basis of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and relationships based on that consciousness – relationships between individuals, between people and the earth and all her inhabitants, and between people and God.

Indra Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, a disciple of His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami, has been a practicing structural engineer for thirty years and has worked in various capacities in a public sector company in India and with multinational companies in various parts of the world. He is a graduate of IIT Kharagpur and a post-graduate of IIT Delhi. To contribute to this cause, email him at indrakrishnadas.jps@gmail.com.

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Rajkot, Gujarat — Sri Sri Radha Neelmadhav Dham, Kalawad Rd., opposite Kankot Patiya, Mota Mava, 360 005/ Tel. 9898550185/ vaishnavseva@yahoo.co.in
Raipur, Chhatisgarh — Hare Krishna Land, Alopi Nagar, Opposite Maharshi Vidyalaya, Tatibandh, Raipur 492 001/ Tel. (771) 5037555
Ranaghat, WB — Gourdham, Habibpur, Ranaghat, Dist. Nadia, 741 403/ Tel. (3473) 281150 or 281226/ shyamrup.jps@pamho.net
Salem, TN — ISKCON, Hare Krishna Land, Karuppur 636 012/ Tel. (427) 2001686/ iskcon.salem@pamho.net
Secunderabad, AP — 27 St. John's Rd., 500 026/ Tel. (40) 780-5232/ Fax: (40) 814021
Silchar, Assam — Ambikapatti, Silchar, Dist. Cachar, 788 004/ Tel. (3842) 34615
Siliguri, WB — ISKCON Road, Gitalpara, 734 406/ Tel. (353) 426619, 539046, or 539082/ Fax: (353) 526130
Solapur, Maharashtra — Amruta Apartment, Old Akalkot Nagar, Dist. Solapur, 413 005/ Tel. 9371178393/ shursendas@yahoo.co.in
Srirangam, TN — 103 Amma Mandapam Rd., Srirangam, Trichy 620 006/ Tel. (431) 2433945/ iskcon_srirangam@yahoo.co.in
Surat, Gujarat — Ashram Rd., Jahangirpura, 395 005/ Tel. (261) 276-5891 or 276-5516/ surat@pamho.net
Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala — Hospital Rd., Thycaud, 695 014/ Tel. (471) 2328197/ jsdasa@yahoo.co.in
Tirunelveli, TN — 10B Tiruvananthapuram, Near Vannarapettai Circle, 627 002/ Tel. (462) 2501640
Tirupati, AP — K.T. Rd., Vinayaka Nagar, 517 507/ Tel. (877) 2231760 or 2230009/ revati.raman.jps@pamho.net; Guestouse: guesthouse.tirupati@pamho.net
Udhampur, J&K — Srila Prabhupada Ashram, Srila Prabhupada Marg, Srila Prabhupada Nagar, 182 101/ Tel. (1992) 270298/ info@iskconudhampur.com
Ujjain, MP — 35–37 Hare Krishna Land, Bharatpuri, 456 010/ Tel. (734) 2535000 or 2531000, or 9300969016/ Fax: (734) 2536000/ iskcon.ujjain@pamho.net
Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat — Opp. B&B Polytechnic, Mota Bazaar, Dist. Anand, 388 120/ Tel. (26192) 230796 or 233012/ iskcon.vvnagar@pamho.net
Varanasi, UP — ISKCON, B 27/80 Durgakund Rd., Near Durgakund Police Station, Varanasi 221 010/ Tel. (542) 276422 or 222617
Vellore, TN — Chennai Ext. Centre, 10–12, 10th East Cross Rd., Gandhi Nagar, 632 006
Vijayawada, AP — Venkatapalem Karakatta Rd., Undavalli Village, Tadepalli Mandal, Vijayawada, Guntur Dist. 522 501/ Tel. (8645) 272513/ mmdasiskconvijayawada@gmail.com
Visakhapatnam, AP — Hare Krishna Land, Sagaranagar-45 (City office and mail: Plot No. 52, Pandurangapuram Beach Rd., Visakhapatnam 530 043)/ Tel. (891) 2528376 or 6537625/ samba.jps@pamho.net; Guesthouse: guesthouse.vizag@pamho.net
◆ **Vrindavan, UP —** Krishna-Balaram Mandir, Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg, Raman Reti, Mathura Dist., 281 124/ Tel. & fax: (565) 2540728/ iskcon.vrindavan@pamho.net; (Guesthouse) Tel. (565) 2540022/ ramamani@sancharnet.in
Warangal, AP — Mulugu Rd., Ayappa Pidipally, 506 007/ Tel. (8712) 426182

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Assam — Karnamadhu, Dist. Karimganj
Chamorshi, Maharashtra — 78 Krishnanagar Dham, Dist. Gadhachiroli, 442 603/ Tel. (218) 623473
Hyderabad, AP (New Naimisaranya Farm) — P. O. Dabilpur Village, Medchal Tq., R.R. Dist., 501 401/ Tel. (40) 65520070 or 9440057263
Indore, MP (Krishna-Balarama Mandir) — Hare Krishna Vihar, Nipania Village/ Tel. (731) 572794
Mayapur, WB — (contact ISKCON Mayapur)
Puri, Odisha — ISKCON, Bhaktivedanta Ashram, Sipasirubuli, 752 001/ Tel. (6752) 230494

Many temples have their own websites, which you can find at our online directory: http://directory.krishna.com. Telephone numbers include country codes, identified by a +. To save space, we've skipped the codes for North America (1) and India (91). For information on international calling, go to www.howtocallabroad.com. ◆ Temples with restaurants or dining

Centers Around the World

Surat, Gujarat — Bhaktivedanta Rajavidyalaya, Krishnalok, Surat-Bardoli Rd., Gangapur, P. O. Gangadhara, Dist. Surat, 394 310/ Tel. (02622) 63546

Vrindavan, UP — Vrinda Kund, Nandagaon, Dist. Mathura, U.P.

Yamunanagar, Haryana — Hare Krishna Dham, Sri Sri Radha Kunj Bihari Mandir, Near Lal Dwara Road, Opposite Raghunathpuri, Lal Dwara Colony, Near Gopal Motor Garage, 135003/ Tel. 9996001817/ kumarstainless@yahoo.in

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Kolkata, WB — Govinda's, ISKCON House, 22 Gurusaday Rd., 700 019/ Tel. (33) 24866922 or 24866009

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Bahau — 156 Taman Sornam, Bahau 72100, Negeri Sembilan/ Tel. +60 (6) 481-4350 or 454-8982/ paramanandakp@yahoo.com

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Klang — No. 20, Lorong Besi 4, Off Jl. Teluk Pulai, Selangor D.E., 41100/ Tel. +60 (12) 6342464, (12) 3179206 or (603) 33712060/ ramram991@yahoo.com

Kuala Lumpur — Lot 9901, Jalan Awan Jawa, Taman Yarl, 58200 Kuala Lumpur/ Tel. +60 (3) 7980-7355/ Fax: +60 (3) 7987-9901/ president@iskconkl.com

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Sungei Petani — Lot 46, Jalan 1/6, Taman Sri Wang, 08000 Sungei Petani/ abbay_143@hotmail.com

Taiping — 24 Lorong Panglima (Cator Ave.), Assam Kumbang, 34000 Taiping, Perak D.R. (mail: 590 Jalan Wat Siam, Kampung Pinang, 34600 Kamunting, Taiping, Perak)/ Tel. +60 (5) 807-9702 or 808-1475

Teluk Intan — Jalan Sungai Manik, 36000 Teluk Intan, Perak/ Tel. +63 (32) 83254

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Chittagong, Bangladesh — Caitanya Cultural Society, 23 Nandan Kanan, N. N. Paul Blvd./ Tel. + 880 (31) 610822

Chittagong, Bangladesh — Sri Krishna Mandir, in front of Afmi Plaza, Prabartak Sangha (mail: P. O. Box 440)/ Tel. +880 (31) 2551950, 610822; or 1819395948/ iskconctg@gmail.com

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Jessore, Bangladesh — Nitai Gaur Mandir, Kathakhali Bazaar P. O., Panjia

Jessore, Bangladesh — Sri Rup-Sanatan Smriti Tirtha Mandir, Ramshara, Magurahat P. O., Abhaynagar

Kathmandu, Nepal — Budhanilkantha (mail: GPO Box 3520)/ Tel. +977 (1) 4373790 or 4373786/ Fax: (1) 414409 (Attn: ISKCON)/ iskconkathmandu@gmail.com

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Osaka, Japan — 1-1-17 Katamachi, Miyakojima-ku, Osaka 534-0025/ Tel. +81 (6) 6352-0729

Sylhet, Bangladesh — Yugal Tila, Kajalshah, Opp. Osmani Medical College, Gate No. 1, Sylhet 03100/ Tel. +880 821721358, 1711478190, or 1718781144/ info@iskconsylhet.com

Tai Pei City, Taiwan — Zhong Xiao East Rd., Sec 2, Lane 39, Alley 2, No 3, 2F/ Tel. +886 (2) 2395-6010 or 2395-6715/ bhavna@ms22.hinet.net

Tokyo, Japan — 2-23-4 Funabori, Edogawa-ku, Tokyo 134-0091/ Tel. +81 (3) 3877-3000/ iskcon.new.gaya.japan@gmail.com

Yogyakarta, Indonesia — P. O. Box 25, Babarsari YK, DIY

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Bangladesh (Sri Pundarika Dhama) — Mekhla, Hathazari, Dist. Chittagong/ Tel. +880 (31) 610822

Bangladesh (Comilla) — Jagannathpur, Comilla

Indonesia (Govinda Kunja) — (contact ISKCON Jakarta)

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Tokyo — Devadeva Cafe, 2-14-7 Kichijoji-Honcho, Musashino-City, Tokyo/ Tel. +81 (422) 21-6220; info@devadevacafe.com

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Edmonton, Alberta — 9353 35th Ave. NW, T6E 5R5/ Tel. (780) 439-9999/ harekrishna.edmonton@gmail.com

Montreal, Quebec — 1626 Pie IX Blvd., H1V 2C5/ Tel. & fax: (514) 521-1301/ iskconmontreal@gmail.com

◆ **Ottawa, Ontario —** 212 Somerset St. E., K1N 6V4/ Tel. (613) 565-6544/ Fax: (613) 565-2575/ iskconottawa@sympatico.ca

Regina, Saskatchewan — 1279 Retallack St., S4T 2H8/ Tel. (306) 525-0002 or -6461/ jagadishadas@yahoo.com

◆ **Toronto, Ontario —** 243 Avenue Rd., M5R 2J6/ Tel. (416) 922-5415/ Fax: (416) 922-1021/ info@torontokrishna.com

Vancouver, B.C. — 5462 S.E. Marine Dr., Burnaby V5J 3G8/ Tel. (604) 433-9728/ Fax: (604) 648-8715/ ISKCONVancouver@gmail.com; Govinda's Bookstore & Cafe/ Tel. (604) 433-7100 or 1-888-433-8722

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Ashcroft, B.C. — Saranagati Dhama, Venables Valley (mail: P.O. Box 99, VOK 1A0)/ Tel. (250) 457-7438/ Fax: (250) 453-9306/ info@saranagativillage.com

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Baltimore, Maryland —200 Bloomsbury Ave., Catonsville, 21228/ Tel. (410) 744-1624/ contact@iskconbaltimore.org

Berkeley, California — 2334 Stuart St., 94705/ Tel. (510) 540-9215/ info@iskconberkeley.net

Boise, Idaho — 1615 Martha St., 83706/ Tel. (208) 344-4274/ boise_temple@yahoo.com

Boston, Massachusetts — 72 Commonwealth Ave., 02116/ Tel. (617) 247-8611/ Fax: (617) 909-5181/ info@iskconboston.org

Chicago, Illinois — 1716 W. Lunt Ave., 60626/ Tel. (773) 973-0900/ Fax: (773) 973-0526/ chicagoiskcon@yahoo.com

Columbus, Ohio — 379 W. Eighth Ave., 43201/ Tel. (614) 421-1661/ premvilasdas.rns@gmail.com

◆ **Dallas, Texas —** 5430 Gurley Ave., 75223/ Tel. (214) 827-6330/ Fax: (214) 823-7264/ info@radhakalachandji.com

◆ **Denver, Colorado —** 1400 Cherry St., 80220/ Tel. (303) 333-5461/ Fax: (303) 321-9052/ info@krishnadenver.com

Detroit, Michigan — 383 Lenox Ave., 48215/ Tel. (313) 824-6000/ gaurangi108@hotmail.com

Gainesville, Florida — 214 N.W. 14th St., 32603/ Tel. (352) 336-4183/ Fax: (352) 379-2927/ kalakantha.acbsp@pamho.net

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Las Vegas, Nevada — 7181 Dean Martin Dr., 89118/ Tel. (702) 434-8332/ info@govindascenter.com

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Orlando, Florida — 2651 Rouse Rd., 32817/ Tel. (407) 257-3865/ info@iskconorlando.com

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania — 41 West Allens Lane, 19119/ Tel. (215) 247-4600/ Fax: (215) 247-8702/ info@iskconphiladelphia.com

◆ **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania —** 1408 South St., 19146/ Tel. (215) 985-9303/ govindasvegetarian@gmail.com

Phoenix, Arizona — 100 S. Weber Dr., Chandler, 85226/ Tel. (480) 705-4900/ Fax: (480) 705-4901/ premadhatridd@gmail.com

Portland, Oregon — 2095 NW Aloclek Dr., Suites 1107 & 1109, Hillsboro 97124/ Tel. (503) 675-5000/ info@iskconportland.com

◆ **St. Louis, Missouri —** 3926 Lindell Blvd., 63108/ Tel. (314) 535-8085 or 534-1708/ Fax: (314) 535-0672/ rpsdas@gmail.com

Salt Lake City, Utah — 965 E. 3370 South, 84106/ Tel. (801) 487-4005/ utahkrishnas@gmail.com

San Antonio, Texas — 677 Oxford Trace, 78240/ Tel. (210) 420-1182/ aadasa@gmail.com

◆ **San Diego, California —** 1030 Grand Ave., Pacific Beach 92109/ Tel. (858) 483-2500/ Fax: (858) 483-0941/ krishna.sandiego@gmail.com

San Jose, California — Mountain View, California, 1965 Latham St., 94040/ Tel. 408 293 4959/ isvtemple108@gmail.com

Seattle, Washington — 1420 228th Ave. S.E., Sammamish 98075/ Tel. (425) 246-8436/ Fax: (425) 868-8928/ info@vedicculturalcenter.org

◆ **Spanish Fork, Utah —** Krishna Temple Project & KHQN Radio, 8628 S. State Rd., 84660/ Tel. (801) 798-3559/ Fax: (810) 798-9121/ carudas@earthlink.net

Tallahassee, Florida — 1323 Nylic St., 32304/ Tel. & fax: (850) 224-3803/ tallahassee.iskcon@gmail.com

Towaco, New Jersey — 100 Jacksonville Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 109), 07082/ Tel. & fax: (973) 299-0970/ madhupati.jas@pamho.net

◆ **Tucson, Arizona —** 711 E. Blacklidge Dr., 85719/ Tel. (520) 792-0630/ Fax: (520) 791-0906/ sandaminidd@cs.com

Washington, D.C. — 10310 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, Maryland 20854/ Tel. (301) 299-2100/ Fax: (301) 299-5025/ info@iskconofdc.org

RURAL COMMUNITIES

◆ **Alachua, Florida (New Raman Reti) —** 17306 N.W. 112th Blvd., 32615 (mail: P.O. Box 819, 32616)/ Tel. (386) 462-2017/ Fax: (386) 462-2641/ alachuatemple@gmail.com

Carriere, Mississippi (New Talavan) — 31492 Anner Road, 39426/ Tel. (601) 749-9460 or 799-1354/ Fax: (601) 799-2924/ talavan@hughes.net

Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill) — Carr. 181, Km. 16.3, Bo. Santa Rita, Gurabo (mail: HC-01, Box 8440, Gurabo, PR 00778)/ Tel. (787) 367-3530 or (787) 737-1722/ manonatha@gmail.com

CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

Hillsborough, North Carolina (New Goloka) — 1032 Dimmocks Mill Rd., 27278/ Tel. (919) 732-6492/ bkgoswami@earthlink.net
◆ **Moundsville, West Virginia (New Vrindaban) —** 3759 McCrearys Ridge Rd., 26041/ Tel. (304) 843-1600 (Guesthouse extension: 111)/ mail@newvrindaban.com
Mulberry, Tennessee (Murari-sevaka) — 532 Murari Lane, 37359/ Tel. (931) 759-6888/ murari_sevaka@yahoo.com
Port Royal, Pennsylvania (Gita Nagari) — 534 Gita Nagari Rd./ Tel. (717) 527-4101/ dhruva.bts@pamho.net
Sandy Ridge, North Carolina — Prabhupada Village, 1283 Prabhupada Rd., 27046/ Tel. (336) 593-2322/ prabhupadavillage@gmail.com

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Hato Rey, Puerto Rico — Tamal Krishna's Veggie Garden, 131 Eleanor Roosevelt, 00918/ Tel. (787) 754-6959/ Fax: (787) 756-7769/ tkveggiegarden@aol.com

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Birmingham, England — 84 Stanmore Rd., Edgbaston B16 9TB/ Tel. +44 (121) 420 4999/ iskconbirmingham@gmail.com
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Coventry, England — Kingfield Rd., Coventry (mail: 19 Gloucester St., Coventry CV1 3BZ)/ Tel. +44 (24) 7655 2822 or 5420/ haridas.kds@pamho.net
◆ **Dublin, Ireland —** 83 Middle Abbey St., Dublin 1/ Tel. +353 (1) 661 5095/ dublin@krishna.ie; Govinda's: info@govindas.ie
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◆ **London, England (country) —** Bhaktivedanta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Lane, Watford, Herts, WD25 8EZ/ Tel. +44 (1923) 851000/ Fax: +44 (1923) 851006/ info@krishnatemple.com; Guesthouse: bmguesthouse@krishna.com
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◆ **Swansea, Wales —** 8 Craddock St., SA1 3EN/ Tel. +44 (1792) 468469/ iskcon.swansea@pamho.net (restaurant: govin–das@hotmail.com)

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Upper Lough Erne, Northern Ireland — Govindadwipa Dhama, Inisrath Island, Derrylin, Co. Fermanagh, BT92 9GN/ Tel. +44 (28) 6772 3878/ govindadwipa@pamho.net
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Pecs — Damjanich u. 22, 7624 Pecs/ Tel. +36 (72) 515-991/ Fax: (72) 313-771/ pecs@pamho.net

RURAL COMMUNITY

Somogyvamos — Krsna-völgy, Fö u. 38, 8699 Somogyvamos/ Tel. & fax: +36 (85) 540-002 or 340-185/ info@krisnavolgy.hu

RESTAURANT

Budapest — Govinda Restaurant, Vigyazo Ferenc St. 4, 1051 Budapest/ Tel. +36 (1) 269-1625 or 302-2284/ Fax: (01) 473-1310

ITALY

Bergamo — Villaggio Hare Krishna (da Medolago strada per Terno d'Isola), 24040 Chignolo d'Isola (BG)/ Tel. +39 (035) 4940705/ Fax: +39 (035) 199622233/ villagio.hare.krsna@hare.krsna.it
◆ **Rome —** Centro Hare Krishna, Via Sardegna, 55 (traversa Via Veneto), 00187/ Tel. +39 (06) 68891540 or 3331976517/ info@iskconroma.it
Vicenza — via Roma 9, 36020 Albettone (VI)/ Tel. +39 (0444) 790573/ Fax: +39 (0444) 790581/ prabhupadadesh@pamho.net

RURAL COMMUNITY

◆ **Florence (Villa Vrindavan) —** via Scopeti 108, 50026 San Casciano in Val di Pesa (FI)/ Tel. +39 (055) 820054/ Fax: +39 (055) 828470/ isvaripriya@libero.it

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT

Milan — Govinda's, via Valpetrosa 5, 20123/ Tel. +39 (02) 862417

SPAIN

Barcelona — Plaza Reial 12, Entlo 2, 08002/ Tel. +34 93 302-5194/ templobcn@hotmail.com
Madrid — Espíritu Santo 19, 28004/ Tel. +34 91 521-3096
Málaga — Ctra. Alora, 3, Int., 29140 Churriana/ Tel. +34 95 262-1038/ info@harekrishnamalaga.com

RURAL COMMUNITY

Brihuega (New Vraja Mandala) — (Santa Clara) 19411 Brihuega / Tel. +34 949 280436

SWEDEN

◆ **Gothenburg —** Karl Johansgatan 57, SE-414 55, Göteborg/ Tel. +46 (31) 421642/ info@harekrishnagoteborg.com
Grödinge — Radha-Krishna Temple, Korsnäs Gård, 14792 Grödinge/ Tel. +46 (8) 53029800/ Fax: +46 (8) 53025062/ bmd@pamho.net
◆ **Lund —** Bredgatan 28, 222 21/ Tel. +46 (46) 399500; Restaurant: +46 (46) 120413/ Fax: +46 (46) 188804/ locan@bbt.se
◆ **Stockholm —** Fridhemsgatan 22, 11240/ Tel. +46 (8) 654-9002/ Fax: +46 (8) 650-8813/ Restaurant: Tel. & fax: +46 (8) 654-9004/ lokanatha@hotmail.com

RURAL COMMUNITY

Järna — Almviks Gård, 153 95/ Tel. +46 (8551) 52050/ Fax: +46 (8551) 52060/ info@almviksgard.se

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT

Malmo — Govinda's, Brogatan 11, 211 44 Malmo/ Tel. +46 (732) 306663

OTHER COUNTRIES

Amsterdam, The Netherlands — Van Hilligaertstraat 17, 1072 JX/ Tel. +31 (20) 675-1404/ Fax: +31 (20) 675-1405/ amsterdam@pamho.net
◆ **Bratislava, Slovakia —** Sulovska 44, Bratislava 82105/ Tel. +421 (910) 907676/ paramesvara.kks@gmail.com
Cakovec, Croatia — Radnicka 2, Svaska ves, 40000 Cakovec/ Tel. & fax: +385 (40) 334312
Copenhagen, Denmark — Skjulhøj Alle 44, 2720 Vanløse, Copenhagen/ Tel. +45 4828 6446/ Fax: +45 4828 7331/ iskcon.denmark@pamho.net
Helsinki, Finland — Ruoholahdenkatu 24 D (III krs) 00180/ Tel. +358 (9) 694-9879 or -9837/ harekrishna@harekrishna.fi
Karlovac, Croatia — Set. Dr. Franje Tudmana 5a, Karlovac 47000/ Tel. & fax: +385 (47) 600601/ info@avadhuta.hr
Kaunas, Lithuania — 37, Savanoryu pr., 3000/ Tel. +370 (7) 22-2574 or 26-8953/ Fax: +370 (7) 70-6642/ krsna.info@gmail.com
Kokosovce, Slovakia — Abranovce 60, 08252 Kokosovce/ Tel. +421 (51) 7798482
Langenthal, Switzerland — Gaura Bhaktiyoga Center, Dorfgasse 43, 4900 Langenthal/ Tel. +41 62 922 05 48/ gaura.bhaktiyoga.center@gmx.ch
◆ **Lisbon, Portugal —** Rua Dona Estefania, 91 R/C 1000 Lisboa/ Tel. & fax: +351 (1) 314-0314 or 352-0038
◆ **Ljubljana, Slovenia —** Zibertova 27, 1000/ Tel. +386 (1) 4312319 or 4312124/ Fax: +386 (61) 310815/ ananta.rns@pamho.net
Osijek, Croatia — Ivana Gundulica 9, 31000 Osijek/ Tel. +385 (31) 202759
Oslo, Norway — Roahagan 1D, Oslo 0754/ Tel. +47 (22) 062266/ gaurahari.sdha@pamho.net
Paris, France — 230 Avenue de la Division Leclerc, 95200 Sarcelles Village/ Tel. +33 682590079/ paris@pamho.net
Porto, Portugal — Rua S. Miguel 19, 4050-560 (mail: Apartado 4108, 4002-001)/ Tel. & fax: +351 (222) 007-223/ oriente.porto@teleweb.pt
Prague, Czech Republic — Postal address: Hare Krishna Temple, Luzce 48, 267 18, post office Karlstejn, Czech Republic (for directions: http://harekrsna.cz/cvs/how_get_there)/ Tel. +420 311 516 558 or +420 603 205 991/ info@harekrsna.cz
Pula, Croatia — Vinkuran centar 58, 52000 (mail: P.O. Box 16)/ Tel. & fax: +385 (52) 573581
◆ **Radhadesh, Belgium —** Chateau de Petite Somme, 6940 Septon-Durbuy/ Tel. +32 (086) 322926 (restaurant: 321421)/ Fax: +32 (086) 322929/ radhadesh@pamho.net
◆ **Riga, Latvia —** Krishyana Barona 56, Riga LV1011/ Tel. +371 67272490 or 29513891/ Fax: +371 67272491/ iskcon@balticom.lv
Rijeka, Croatia — Ivana Zajca 6/2, 51000 Rijeka (mail: P.O. Box 61)/ Tel. +385 (98) 697436/ info@harekrsna-ri.com
Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina — Prosorska 11, 71000/ Tel. +387 (33) 644 387/ templesarajevo@yahoo.com
Skopje, Macedonia — Centar za Vedski Studii, ul. 31, 33 1000 Skopje/ Tel. +389 23061846/ info@harekrishna.mk
Sofia, Bulgaria — 4 J. Kjuri Str., 1113 Sofia/ Tel. +359 (2) 9719714/ iskcon@harekrishnabg.com
Sofia, Bulgaria — 119 Kliment Ohridski Str., kv. Malinova Dolina/ Tel. +359 (2) 9616050/ oks_sofia@abv.bg
◆ **Tallinn, Estonia —** Luise St. 11a, 10142/ Tel. +372 6460047/ info@harekrishna.ee
Timisoara, Romania — Porumbescu 92, 1900/ Tel. & fax +40 (56) 154776/
Vilnius, Lithuania — 23-1, Raugyklos G, 2024/ Tel. +370 (5) 2135218/ vilnius@pamho.net
Warsaw, Poland — Mysiadlo k. Warszawy, 05-500 Piaseczno, ul. Zakret 11/ Tel. +48 (22) 750-7797 or -8247/ Fax: +48 (22) 750-8249/ kryszna@post.pl
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Zürich, Switzerland — Bergstrasse 54, 8032/ Tel. +41 (044) 262 33 88/ kgs@pamho.net

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Czech Republic — Krisnuv Dvur, Mestecko u Benesova, Postupice 257 01/ Tel. +420 (603) 700512 or 215380/ farma@krisnuvdvur.cz
France (La Nouvelle Mayapura) — Domaine d'Oublaisse, 36360, Lucay le Mâle/ Tel. +33 (2) 5440-2395/ Fax: +33 (2) 5440-2893/ oublaise@free.fr

CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

Poland (New Santipur) — Czarnow 21, 58-424 Pisarzowice, woj. dolnoslaskie/ Tel. +48 (75) 744-8892/ radhu@wp.pl

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Bratislava, Slovakia — Govinda, Obchodna 30, 811 06 Bratislava/ Tel. +421 (2) 5926 2366
Kosice, Slovakia — Govinda, Puskinova 8, 040 01 Kosice/ Tel. +421 (910) 947112
Locarno, Switzerland — Govinda Restaurant, Via Della Motta 10, Locarno 6600/ Tel. +41 (091) 7523852 or 796260804/ radhakanta@pamho.net
Ljubljana, Slovenia — Holyfood (snackbar), Igriska 5, 1000 Ljubljana/ Tel. +386 (1) 251 13 84 or (41) 32 37 19
Oslo, Norway — Krishna's Cuisine, Sørkedalsveien 10, 0369 Oslo/ Tel. +47 (2) 269-2269
Prague, Czech Republic — Govinda's, Soukenicka 27, 110 00 Prague 1/ Tel. +420 605 700 871 or 605 700 874/ info@govindarestaurace.cz
Prague, Czech Republic — Govinda's, Na hrazi 5, 180 00 Prague 8–Liben/ Tel. +420 (2) 8482-3805/ restaurace@govinda.cz
Prague, Czech Republic — Balarama, Orlicka 9, 130 00 Prague 3–Vinohrady/ Tel. +420 (2) 2272 8885/ info@balarama.cz
Presov, Slovakia — Govinda, Hlavna 70, 08001/ Tel. +421 (910) 947108
Tallinn, Estonia — Damodara, Lauteri St. 1, 10114/ Tel. +372 6442650
Zurich, Switzerland — Mohini, Weinbergstr. 15, 8001 Zurich/ Tel. +41 44 252 52 11/ info@mohini.ch

COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES

RUSSIA

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Chita — 27, Kurnatovskogo St./ Tel. +7 (3022) 234971 or 230911
Ekaterinburg — 620078, G. Ekaterinburg, per. Otdelniy 5DK VOG/ Tel. +7 (343) 2742200 or 2595262
Irkutsk — St. Krimskaya 6A/ Tel. +7 (3952) 387132 or 324062/ irkutsk@cis.pamho.net
Kazan — 13, Sortirovochnaya St. pos.Yudino/ Tel. +7 (843) 2552529 or 2429991
Krasnodar — 418, Stepnaya St., selo Elizavetinskoye, Krsnodarski krai/ Tel. +7 (861) 2501694
Kurjinovo — 8, Shosseinaya St., pos. Ershovo, Urupski region, Karachayevo-Cherkessia
Moscow — Leningradsky Prospect, Vladenie 39 (mail: Begovaya str., 13, OPS 284, a/ya 17, 125284 Moscow)/ Tel. +7 (495) 7394377/ temple@veda.ru
Moscow — Sri Jagannath Mandir, Selskohozyaistvennaya St. 36, Building 1, Moscow 129323/ Tel. +7 (495) 6421084/ jaduradja@rambler.ru
Murmansk — 16, Frolova St. (mail: P.O. Box 5823)/ Tel. +7 (8152) 58-9284/ upendra@mun.rospac.ru
Nijny Novgorod — 14b, Chernigovskaya St., 603001/ Tel. +7 (8312) 305197 or 252592
Novorossijsk — 117, Shillerovskaya St./ Tel. +7 (8617) 438926 or 451415
Novosibirsk — ul. Gogolya 206/1-73/ Tel. +7 (383) 3447827
Omsk — 664099, 42 10th Severnaya St. (mail: P.O. Box 8741)/ Tel. +7 (3812) 245310 or 2414051
Perm — 76, Generala Chernyakhovskogo, 614000/ Tel. +7 (342) 2755002 or 2260681/ prema.vardhana.das@cis.pamho.net
Rostov-Na-Donu — 84/1, Saryana St., 344025 (mail: P.O. Box 64, 344007)/ Tel. & fax: +7 (48636) 2510456
Samara — 122, Aeroportovskoye sh., Zubchininovka/ Tel. +7 (846) 2970318 or 2970323
Simbirsk — 10, Glinki St., 432002/ Tel. +7 (842) 2414016
Sochi — 81a, Lesnaya St., Bytha/ Tel. +7 (8622) 985639/ Tel. & fax: +7 (8622) 972483
Ulan-Ude — Prirechnaya St. 23, 670013 (mail: P.O. Box 4268, 670000)/ Tel. +7 (3012) 30795/ ulan.ude@cis.pamho.net
Vladimir — Ul. Nikolo-Galeyskaya 56/25, 60000/ Tel. +7 (4922) 326726
Vladivostok — Pikhtovaya St., 33/ Tel. +7 (4232) 35-30-26/ nram@list.ru

RESTAURANTS

Ekaterinburg — Sankirtana, 33 Bardina St./ Tel. +7 (343) 2412737
St. Petersburg — Govinda's, 58, Angliysky pr., 190008/ Tel. +7 (812) 1137896
Vladivostok — Vedic Cuisine, 12, Oleansky pr./ Tel. +7 (4232) 26-89-43/ nram@list.ru

UKRAINE

Dnipropetrovsk — Spusk Kalininskiy 39, 320038/ Tel. +380 (56) 2423631 or 2454709
Donetsk — 22, Rubensa St., Makeyevka 339018/ Tel. +380 (62) 3491488/ premada@iskcon.donetsk.ua
Kharkov — 43, Verknegievskaya St., Holodnaya Gora, 310015/ Tel. +380 (57) 7242167/ kharkov@cis.pamho.net
Kiev — 21V, Dmitrievskaya ap.13, 01054/ Tel. +380 (44) 4844042 or 4821041/ Tel. & fax +380 (44) 4840934
Kiev — 16, Zoryany pereulok. 04078/ Tel. +380 (44) 4338312, or 4347028, or 4345533
Nikolaev — 5-8, Sudostroitelny per., 327052/ Tel. +380 (51) 2479422
Odessa — Sukhoy Liman/ Tel. +380 (48) 7403271
Vinnica — 5, Chkalov St., 28601/ Tel. +380 (43) 2673171

OTHER COUNTRIES

Baku, Azerbaijan — 2A Sharifli, Nizami Dist., AZ1002/ Tel. +994 (12) 4228376/ baku.iskcon@gmail.com
Bishkent, Kyrgyzstan — 5, Omsky per., 720007/ Tel. +996 (312) 242230
Dushanbe, Tajikistan — 38, Anzob St., 734001/ Tel. +7 (372) 271920 or 273990/ gurupriya@cada.tajik.net
Kishinev, Moldova — M. Cogalnichanu 59/ Tel. +373 (22) 277837
Minsk, Belarus — 11, Pavlova St., 220053/ Tel. +375 (17) 2880629/ new.jaipur@cis.pamho.net
Sukhumi, Georgia — St. Pr-t Mira d 274/ Tel. +995 (122) 29954
Tashkent, Uzbekistan — 54, A. Kodirov St., Mirabad Tumani, 700005/ Tel. & fax: +998 (371) 2918501/ tashkentmandir@mail.ru
Tbilisi, Georgia — 16, Kacharava St., Avchalskoye sh., 380053/ Tel. +995 (32) 623326 or 985812

RESTAURANT

Almaty, Kazakhstan — Govinda's, 39 Ablay Khan Ave., Almaty City 050004/ Tel. +7 (727) 2710836/ Fax: +7 (327) 2713235/ kazakh@pamho.net

AUSTRALASIA

AUSTRALIA

Adelaide — 25 Le Hunte St. (mail: P.O. Box 114, Kilburn, SA 5084)/ Tel. & fax: +61 (8) 8359-5120/ iskconsa@tpg.com.au
Brisbane — 32 Jennifer St., Seventeen Mile Rocks, QLD 4073 (mail: PO Box 525, Sherwood, QLD 4075)/ Tel. +61 (7) 3376 2388/ info@iskcon.org.au
Canberra — 1 Quick St., Ainslie, ACT 2602 (mail: P.O. Box 1411, Canberra, ACT 2601)/ Tel. & fax: +61 (2) 6262-6208/ iskcon@harekrishnacanberra.com
Melbourne — 197 Danks St. (mail: P.O. Box 125), Albert Park, VIC 3206/ Tel. +61 (3) 9699-5122/ Fax: +61 (3) 9690-4093/ melbourne@pamho.net
Newcastle — 28 Bull St., Mayfield, NSW 2304/ Tel. +61 (2) 4967-7000/ iskcon_newcastle@yahoo.com.au
Perth — 155–159 Canning Rd., Kalamunda (mail: P.O. Box 201 Kalamunda 6076)/ Tel. +61 (8) 6293-1519/ perth@pamho.net
Sydney — 180 Falcon St., North Sydney, NSW 2060 (mail: P.O. Box 459, Cammeray, NSW 2062)/ Tel. +61 (2) 9959-4558/ Fax: +61 (2) 9957-1893/ admin@iskcon.com.au
Sydney — Govinda's Yoga & Meditation Centre, 112 Darlinghurst Rd., Darlinghurst NSW 2010 (mail: P.O. Box 174, Kings Cross 1340)/ Tel. +61 (2) 9380-5162/ Fax: +61 (2) 9360-1736/ sita@govindas.com.au

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Bambra, VIC (New Nandagram) — 50 Seaches Outlet, off 1265 Winchelsea Deans Marsh Rd., Bambra VIC 3241/ Tel. +61 (3) 5288-7383
Cessnock, NSW (New Gokula) — Lewis Lane (Off Mount View Road, Millfield, near Cessnock [mail: P.O. Box 399, Cessnock, NSW 2325])/ Tel. +61 (2) 4998-1800/ Fax: (Sydney temple)/ iskconfarm@mac.com
Murwillumbah, NSW (New Govardhana) — Tyalgum Rd., Eungella (mail: P.O. Box 687), NSW 2484/ Tel. +61 (2) 6672-6579/ Fax: +61 (2) 6672-5498/ ajita@in.com.au

RESTAURANTS

Brisbane — Govinda's, 99 Elizabeth St., 1st Floor, QLD 4000/ Tel. +61 (7) 3210-0255
Brisbane — Krishna's Cafe, 1st Floor, 82 Vulture St., W. End, QLD 4000/ brisbane@pamho.net
Burleigh Heads — Govindas, 20 James St., Burleigh Heads, QLD 4220/ Tel. +61 (7) 5607-0782/ ajita@in.com.au
Maroochydore — Govinda's Vegetarian Cafe, 2/7 First Ave., QLD 4558/ Tel. +61 (7) 5451-0299
Melbourne — Crossways, 1st Floor, 123 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (3) 9650-2939
Melbourne — Gopal's, 139 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (3) 9650-1578
Newcastle — Govinda's Vegetarian Cafe, 110 King St., corner of King & Wolf Streets, NSW 2300/ Tel. +61 (2) 4929-6900 / info@govindascafe.com.au
Perth — Govinda's Restaurant, 194 William St., Northbridge, WA 6003/ Tel. +61 (8) 9227-1648/ perth@pamho.net
Perth — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 200 William St., Northbridge, WA 6003/ Tel. +61 (8) 9227-1684/ iskconperth@optusnet.com.au

NEW ZEALAND AND FIJI

Auckland, NZ — The Loft, 1st Floor, 103 Beach Rd./ Tel. +64 (9) 3797301
Christchurch, NZ — 83 Bealey Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 25-190)/ Tel. +64 (3) 366-5174/ Fax: +64 (3) 366-1965/ iskconchch@clear.net.nz
Hamilton, NZ — 188 Maui St., RD 8, Te Rapa/ Tel. +64 (7) 850-5108/ rmaster@wave.co.nz
Labasa, Fiji — Delailabasa (mail: P.O. Box 133)/ Tel. +679 812912
Lautoka, Fiji — 5 Tavewa Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 125)/ Tel. +679 666 4112/ regprakash@excite.com
Nausori, Fiji — Hare Krishna Cultural Centre, 2nd Floor, Shop & Save Building, 11 Gulam Nadi St., Nausori Town (mail: P.O. Box 2183, Govt. Bldgs., Suva)/ Tel. +679 9969748 or 3475097/ Fax: +679 3477436/ vdas@frca.org.fj
Rakiraki, Fiji — Rewasa (mail: P.O. Box 204)/ Tel. +679 694243
Sigatoka, Fiji — Sri Sri Radha Damodar Temple, Off Mission St., Sigatoka Town/ Tel. +679 9373703/ drgsmarna@connect.com.fj
Suva, Fiji — 166 Brewster St. (mail: P.O. Box 4229, Samabula)/ Tel. +679 331 8441/ Fax: +679 3100016/ iskconsuva@connect.com.fj
Wellington, NZ — 105 Newlands Rd., Newlands/ Tel. +64 (4) 472-2233
Wellington, NZ — Gaura Yoga Centre, 1st Floor, 175 Vivian St. (mail: P.O. Box 6271, Marion Square)/ Tel. +64 (4) 801-5500/ yoga@gaurayoga.co.nz

RURAL COMMUNITY

Auckland, NZ (New Varshan) — Hwy. 28, Riverhead, next to Huapai Golf Course (mail: R.D. 2, Kumeu)/ Tel. +64 (9) 412-8075/ Fax: +64 (9) 412-7130

RESTAURANTS

Auckland, NZ — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 268 Karangahape Rd./ Tel. +64 (9) 300-7585
Labasa, Fiji — Hare Krishna Restaurant, Naseakula Road/ Tel. +679 811364
Lautoka, Fiji — Gopal's, Corner of Yasawa Street and Naviti Street/ Tel. +679 662990
Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, Dolphins FNPF Place, Victoria Parade/ Tel. +679 314154/ vdas@govnet.gov.fj
Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, Opposite University of the South Pacific, Laucala Bay Rd./ Tel. +679 311683/ vdas@govnet.gov.fj
Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, 18 Pratt St./ Tel. +679 314154
Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, 82 Ratu Mara Rd., Samabula/ Tel. +679 386333
Suva, Fiji — Hare Krishna Vegetarian Restaurant, Terry Walk, Cumming St./ Tel. +679 312295
Wellington, NZ — Higher Taste Hare Krishna Restaurant, Old Bank Arcade, Ground Flr., Corner Customhouse, Quay & Hunter St., Wellington/ Tel. +64 (4) 472-2233

AFRICA

GHANA

Accra — Samsam Rd., Off Accra-Nsawam Hwy., Medie, Accra North (mail: P.O. Box 11686)/ Tel. & fax +233 (21) 229988/ srivas_bts@yahoo.co.in
Kumasi — Twumduasi, near Boadi-Emina, off Kumasi-Accra Road, 3 km from Aninwaa Hospital, Emina, Kumasi/ Tel +233 208320816/ gaurangainkumasi@gmail.com
Nkawkaw — P. O. Box 69
Sunyani — Plot No. 146, South Ridge Estates (mail P.O. Box 685)
Takoradi — New Amanful, P.O. Box 328
Tarkwa — State Housing Estate, Cyanide

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Agona Swedru — Hare Krishna Village, Off Swedru-Winneba Highway, Agona Swedru, Central Region (mail: P.O. Box SW 953, Agonu Swedru 00233)/ Tel. +233 249969922 or 208318312
Eastern Region — Hare Krishna Farm Community, P. O. Box 15, Old Akrade

NIGERIA

Abeokuta — Ibadan Rd., Obanatoka (mail: P.O. Box 5177)
Benin City — 108, Lagos-Uselu Rd., Uselu/ Tel. +234 (52) 258636, +234 8023524924,or +234 8056283995
Enugu — 5/6, Destiny Layout, Old Abakaliki Rd., Near Enugu Airport, Emene (by Efemelumna Bus Stop)/ Tel. +234 8035822545
Ibadan — 700 meters from Iwo Rd., Ibadan-Lagos Express Way, University of Ibadan (mail: P.O. Box 9996)/ Tel. +234 8034687595/ salika108@hotmail.com

Centers Around the World

Jos — Gwarandok Rd., Near Air Force Base, Abattoir Rd., by Nammua, Giring Village (mail: P.O. Box 6557)/ Tel. +234 8034711933/ salika108@hotmail.com
Kaduna — Federal Housing Estate, Abuja Rd., Goningora Village (mail: P.O. Box 1121)/ Tel. +234 8035405080
Lagos — No. 23 Egbeyemi St., Off Coker Rd., Illupeju, Lagos (mail: P. O. Box 8793, Marina)/ Tel. +234 8069245577 or 7066011800/ iskconlagos@yahoo.com
Port Harcourt — Umuebule 11, 2nd tarred road, Etche (mail: P.O. Box 4429, Trans Amadi)/ Tel. +234 8033215096
Warri — Okwodiete Village, Kilo 8, Effurun/Orerokpe Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 1922)/ Tel. +234 8033451265/ kamalaksa@yahoo.com

SOUTH AFRICA

Cape Town — 17 St. Andrews Rd., Rondebosch 7700/ Tel. +27 (21) 6861179/ Fax: +27 (21) 686-8233/ cape.town@pamho.net
◆ **Durban —** 50 Bhaktivedanta Swami Circle, Unit 5 (mail: P.O. Box 56003), Chatsworth, 4030/ Tel. +27 (31) 403-3328/ Fax: +27 (31) 403-4429/ iskcon.durban@pamho.net
Johannesburg — 7971 Capricorn Ave. (entrance on Nirvana Drive East), Ext. 9, Lenasia (mail: P.O. Box 926, Lenasia 1820)/ Tel. +27 (11) 854-1975 or -7969/ iskconjh@iafrica.com
Ladysmith — 19 Azalea Dr., 3370/ Tel. +27 (084) 6108666, (036) 6330968, or (036) 6333711/ jaya@uthukeladm.co.za
Phoenix — 72 Pandora St., Phoenix 4068 (mail: P. O. Box 60992, Phoenix 4060)/ Tel. +27 (31) 507-6559/ Fax: (031) 500-1923/ iskcon.phoenix@pamho.net
Port Elizabeth — 22 Alexander Road, Newton Park, Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province 6045/ Tel. +27 (041) 365 5242/ vrajbaba@gmail.com
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OTHER COUNTRIES

Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire — Temple Hare Krishna (AICK-CI), Cocody-Angre, Cite Blanche, Villa 238/ Tel. +225 22423980, 05648329 or 08416770/ carudesnabts@yahoo.fr
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“Kṛṣṇa Is Coming!”

WHEN ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA’S disciple Mahāmāyā Devī Dāsī published her memoirs about her spiritual master in the year 2000, she titled the book *Śrīla Prabhupāda Is Coming!* The exclamation point aptly captures the devotees’ mood whenever Prabhupāda visited any of the temples his disciples were opening around the world under his direction. Śrīla Prabhupāda was the exalted devotee of God who had inspired us to change our (often quite decadent) lives and steadfastly pursue the highest spiritual goals. We knew that seeing Lord Kṛṣṇa’s pure representative was a gift rarely received even after millions of births in the material world. And, of course, we loved Śrīla Prabhupāda for his charm, wit, grace, power, knowledge, gravity – and the host of other divine qualities he embodied in his unique style as the exemplar of what we were striving for.

Śrīla Prabhupāda knew that his disciples, most of them young in age and in spiritual life, faced many challenges in sticking to the spiritual practices he prescribed and in trying to give Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others. Therefore, despite the obvious sacrifices required, in his old age he traveled constantly to encourage and inspire his disciples.

While the benefits of a visit from Śrīla Prabhupāda are undeniable, we should understand Prabhupāda’s teachings regarding spiritual contact. From the earliest days of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, he taught his disciples about the absolute nature of spiritual association. For example, he wrote in a 1967 letter, “Never think that I am absent from you. Physical presence is not essential; therefore presence by message (or hearing) is real touch. Lord Kṛṣṇa is present by His message, which was delivered 5,000 years ago.”

A profound implication of this point is that Śrīla Prabhupāda is fully present in his teachings. The challenge for us is to realize that truth. In principle, our enthusiasm to associate with him through his teachings – readily available through various media – can be as spontaneous as it was for his disciples about to receive a rare visit from him.

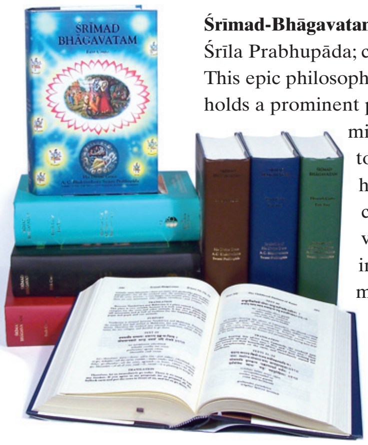
As Prabhupāda points out in the letter I cited, Lord Kṛṣṇa is also present in His teachings. That means we can have His company whenever we want it. Kṛṣṇa is also present in His holy names. When we chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, we are in the company of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. As forgetful souls, we need to repeatedly remind ourselves of that reality. Whenever we read Prabhupāda’s books or chant the holy names, we can think, “Kṛṣṇa is coming! I’m going to spend some time with Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and Prabhupāda and so many other residents of the spiritual world. How exciting! How fortunate I am!”

Ideally, because we can chant Hare Kṛṣṇa anytime, anywhere, in our minds if not out loud, we can always be aware that Kṛṣṇa is right there with us. But our busy lives distract us from that awareness. Therefore, we need to dedicate time every day to nurturing it.

We conditioned souls in the early stages of Kṛṣṇa consciousness struggle against the power of the material energy. But the struggle gets much easier when one is inspired. So, whether we’re entering the temple or the sacred space we’ve created in our home, we can remind ourselves that the same fountain of inspiration Prabhupāda brought to his disciples around the world is still available to us in the abundant spiritual resources he left behind.

– Nāgarāja Dāsa

Śrīla Prabhupāda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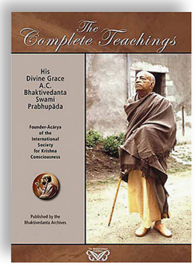
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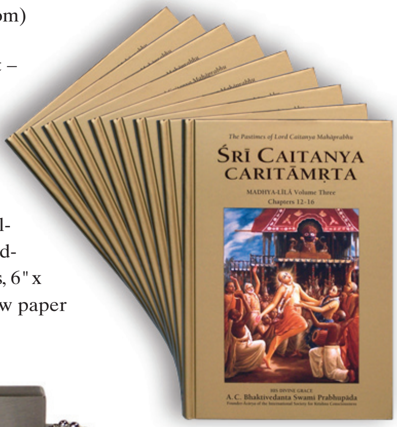
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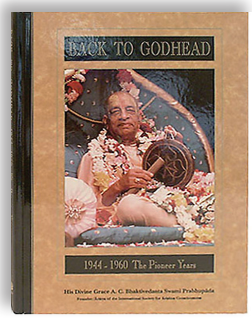
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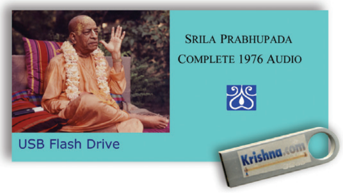
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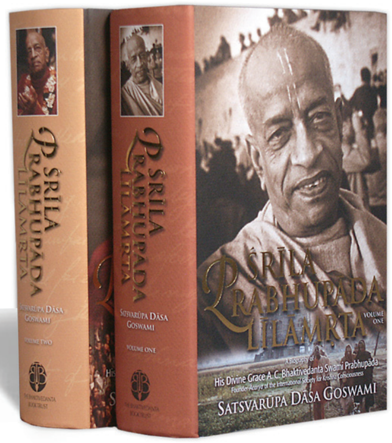
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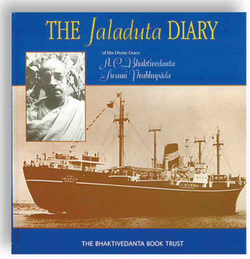
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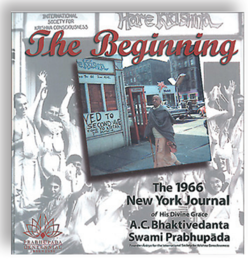
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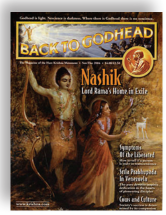
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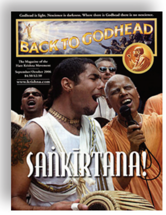
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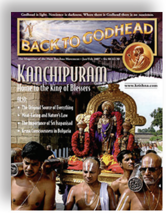
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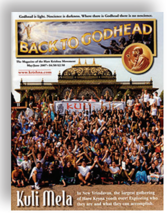
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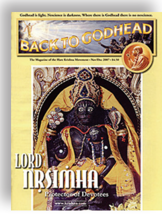
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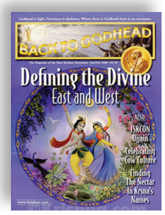
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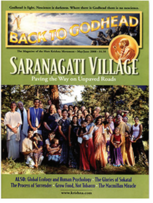
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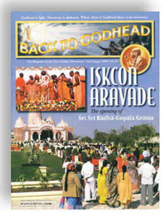
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18

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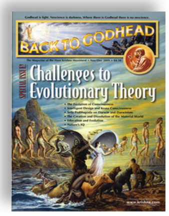
19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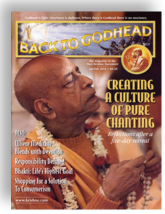
20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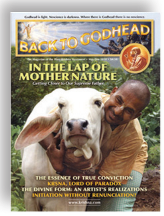
CREATING A CULTURE OF PURE CHANTING

21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IN THE LAP OF MOTHER NATURE

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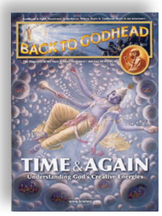
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TIME & AGAIN
Understanding God's Creative Energies

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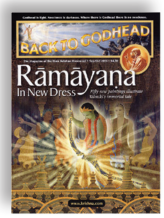
Our Hidden Treasure

24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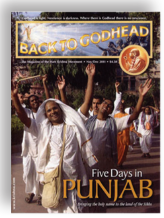
Ramayana
In New Dress

25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26

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The Rising Moon Of Mayapur
The Heart of a Vaisnava

27

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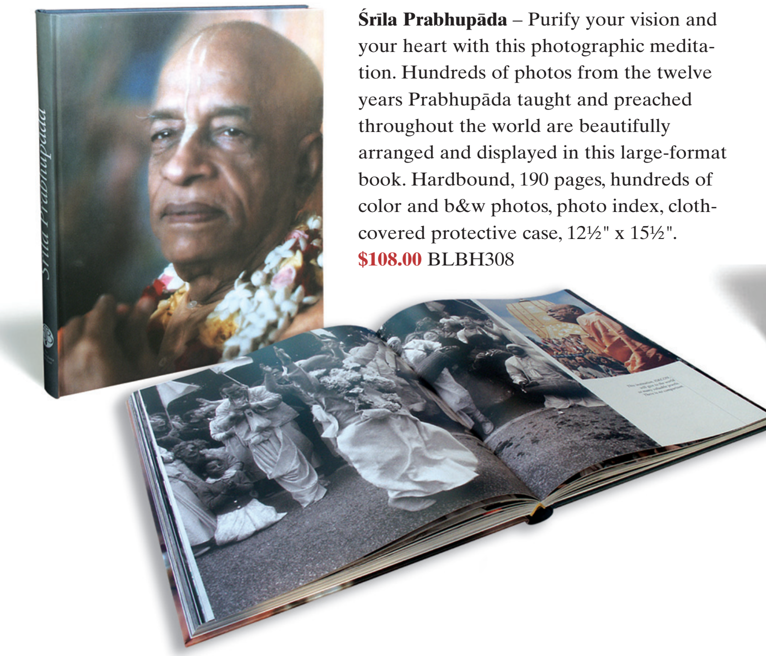
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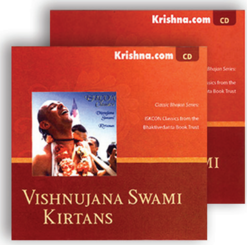
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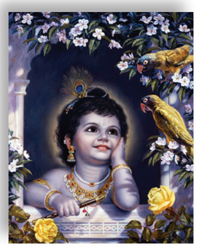
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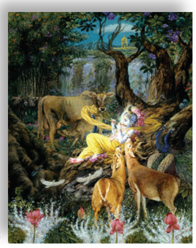
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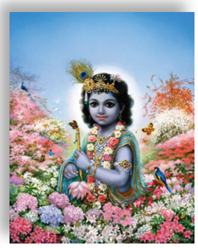
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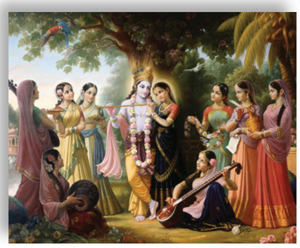
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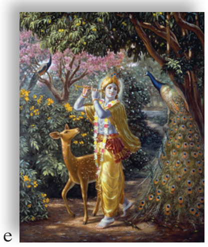
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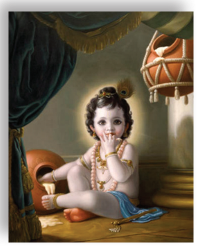
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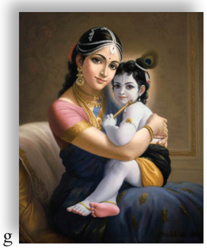
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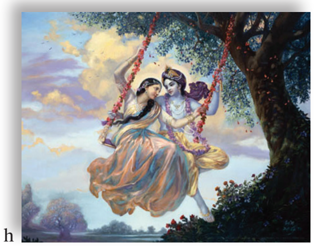
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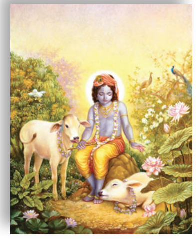
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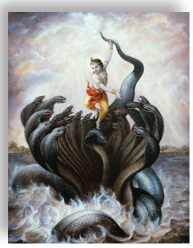
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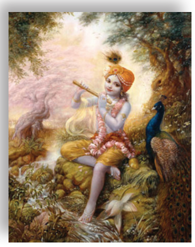
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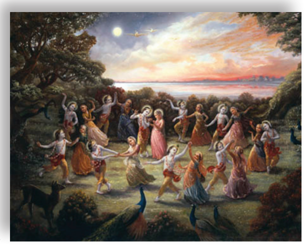
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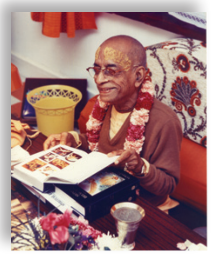

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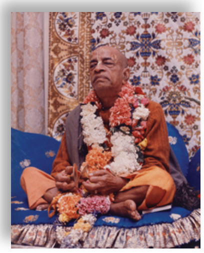

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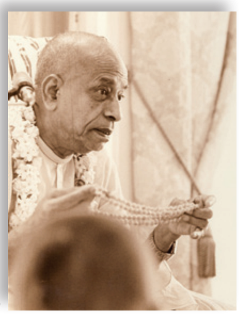
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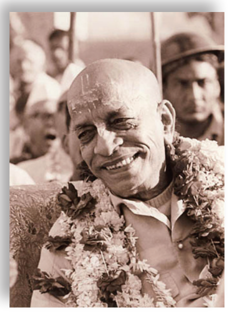
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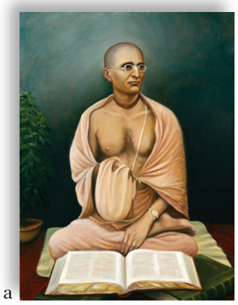
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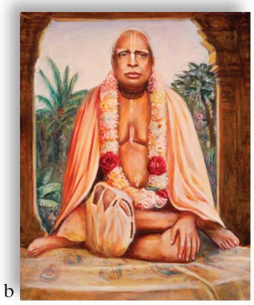
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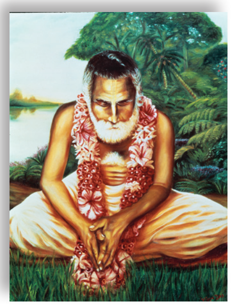
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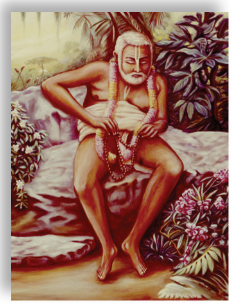
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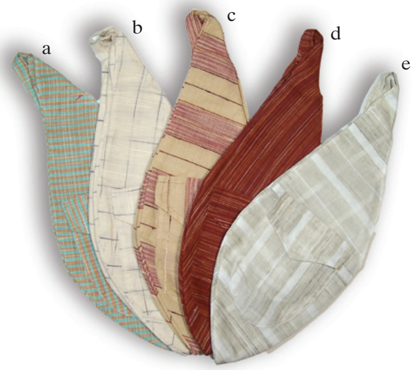

Tulasī Japa Beads, Classic – About 25" long (or about 50" around). Exact length varies by 3–5" because of bead size. Made in India. **$5.95** KCGJ603

Balarama Mṛdaṅga Drum—There is nothing like the sound and quality of the original Balarama *mṛdaṅga*. This sturdy fiberglass Balarama brand *mṛdaṅga* is made in Los Angeles in the traditional style, but of modern elements constructed to withstand even the most exuberant playing. Heads can be tightened with hex screws (hex wrench included). Comes complete with durable strap, heads, and rubber bumper rings. Approximately 25" wide; small head is 3", and large head is 7". Some assembly required. Choose from four colors: Blue, Red, White, or Yellow. **$239.95** BLMM25D

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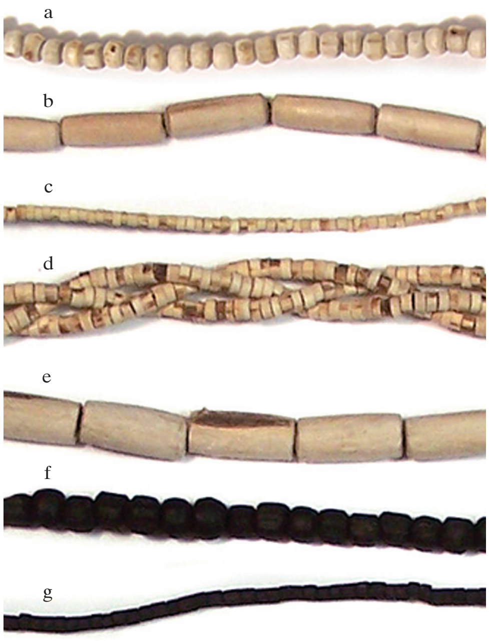

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e) *Rustic* (18") – **$4.95** R3JT825
f) *Black, Medium* (48") – **$5.95** KCJT733
g) *Black, Extra-Thin* (52") – **$4.95** R3JT950

VEDIC THOUGHTS

There is no difference between the kingdom of God and the devotional service of the Lord. Since both of them are on the absolute plane, to be engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord is to have attained the spiritual kingdom.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupāda
Bhagavad-gītā As It Is 2.72, Purport

One who is not connected with the Supreme [in Kṛṣṇa consciousness] can have neither transcendental intelligence nor a steady mind, without which there is no possibility of peace. And how can there be any happiness without peace?

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa
Bhagavad-gītā 2.66

Lord Kṛṣṇa, the one master and the Lord of the universe, is worthy of being served by everyone. Indeed, everyone is but a servant of His servants. That same Lord Kṛṣṇa has descended as Lord Caitanya, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Everyone, therefore, is His servant.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi 6.83–84

Wherever women are respected, even the demigods like to reside there, and wherever women are not respected, all actions are fruitless.

Manu-saṁhitā 3.56

O my Lord, all the great sages headed by Śrīla Vyāsadeva are most experienced regarding the transcendental truth. This is because they discuss and deliberate on the revealed scriptures again and again. Thereby they manifest these sacred books, which reveal Your eternal personal form abounding in all virtuous qualities, and Your divine activities, which are the essence of ambrosial nectar.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
Śrī Gītā-mālā 1.3.1

The study of the *Vedas* and the *Purāṇas* – verily, the study of all scriptures – is completed in all respects by one who studies the *Gītā* with devotion.

Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā-māhātmyam
From *Śrī Vaiṣṇavīya-tantra-sāra*

It is the first duty of the most compassionate souls to divert the wretched taste of the living entities. It is more beneficial to save even one soul from Mahāmāyā's prison than to open millions of hospitals.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura
Amṛta Vāṇī, 108 Instructions (#21)

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who is Śyāmasundara, Kṛṣṇa Himself, with inconceivable innumerable attributes, whom the pure devotees see in their heart of hearts with the eye of devotion tinged with the salve of love.

Lord Brahmā
Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā 5.38

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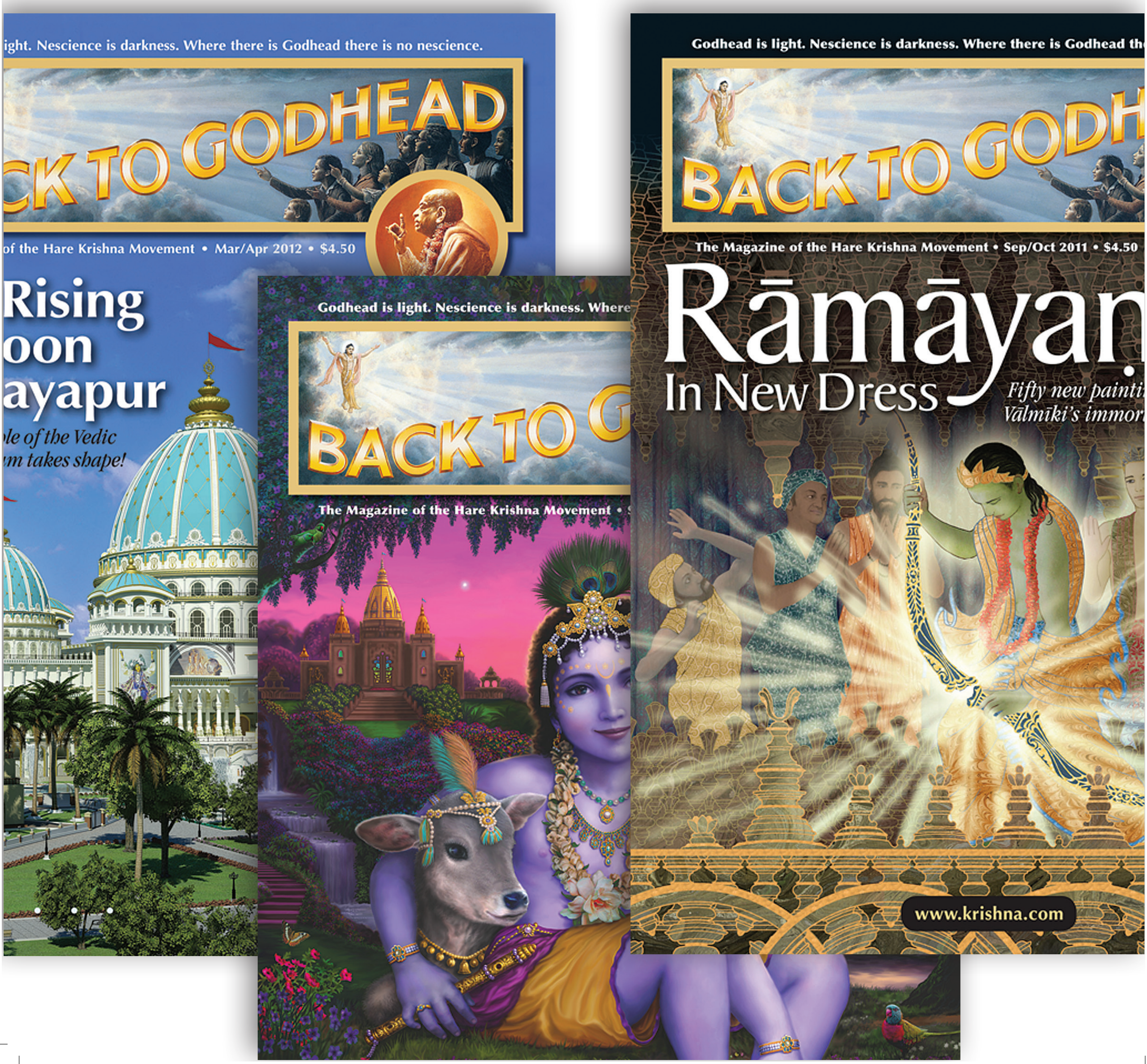
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